

## Our Mission

The Cray Diabetes Self-Management Center supports the University of Kansas Health System's Endocrinology and Internal Medicine Departments for comprehensive diabetes care. The diabetes center is founded on Bud and Sally Cray's beliefs that diabetes treatment should not be hurried and should be based on mutual conversations, listening and problem solving. These beliefs continue to be the driving model for patient care within the program. Patients have opportunities to visit with diabetes educators, attend support groups and take group classes in addition to their regular doctor and advanced practice professional visits.

**For more information contact us at [Craydiabetes@kumc.edu](mailto:Craydiabetes@kumc.edu) or call 913-588-6877.**



## Endocrinology Corner

By Kristin Grdinovac, MD

### How to Check Your Blood Pressure at Home

Maintaining good blood pressure control is especially important with type 2 diabetes because high blood pressure, or hypertension, significantly increases the risk of serious complications. Diabetes increases the likelihood of developing heart disease, stroke, and kidney problems, and having high blood pressure further magnifies those risks. If you have diabetes, keeping your blood pressure in a healthy range is crucial for protecting your heart, kidneys, and overall well-being. The goal for most people with diabetes is to maintain a blood pressure of less than 130/80 mmHg.

Checking your blood pressure at home is an easy way to stay on top of your health. To get an accurate reading, follow these simple tips:

1. Avoid drinking caffeine or exercising for 30 minutes before your reading.
2. Sit in a chair with your feet flat on the floor and your back supported.
3. Rest for 5 minutes before taking your blood pressure.
4. Make sure the cuff is the right size for your arm and that your arm is supported and placed at heart level.
5. Relax and avoid moving, tensing your arm muscles, or speaking during the reading.

It is also helpful to keep a log of your readings and share them with your healthcare team to track any changes over time and adjust your treatment plan. By regularly monitoring and recording your blood pressure, you can better manage your diabetes and lower your risk of complications.

#### SOURCES:

- American Diabetes Association Professional Practice Committee. 10. Cardiovascular disease and risk management: Standards of Care in Diabetes—2024. *Diabetes Care* 2024;47(Suppl. 1):S179–S218.
- Liu H, Zhao D, Sabit A, et al. Arm Position and Blood Pressure Readings: The ARMS Crossover Randomized Clinical Trial. *JAMA Intern Med*. Published online October 07, 2024.

#### Services Available:

- Medical Visits (MD, PA, NP)
- Individual Diabetes Education
- Group Diabetes Education Classes
- Telehealth options available

#### Locations:

- KUMC Main Campus - 2000 Olathe Blvd, Kansas City, KS 66160
- College Square Medical Pavilion - 12000 W 110th, Overland Park, KS 66210
- Englewood Center - 101 NW Englewood Rd, Gladstone, MO 64118



## Newest Cray Provider

By Alexis Simons, Pharm D

Hello! I am the new pharmacist at the Cray Diabetes Center. My role consists of meeting with patients for diabetes medication management and working with patients that are prescribed specialty medications within endocrinology.

I am originally from Emporia, Kansas and went to the University of Kansas for my B.S. in Pharmaceutical Studies and my Doctor of Pharmacy. After graduation, I completed a PGY1 Community-based Pharmacy Residency with Aurora Health Care in Milwaukee, Wisconsin where I spent time developing clinical services in outpatient pharmacies and meeting with patients through a longitudinal experience in a Family Medicine clinic co-managing diabetes, hypertension, and dyslipidemia. I went on to complete a PGY2 in Ambulatory Care at the University of Colorado. During this second year of residency, I worked through a collaborative practice agreement for medication management in Internal Medicine, Family Medicine, Endocrinology, Geriatrics, and FQHC clinics. I also completed rotation experiences in Population Health and Academia with the school of pharmacy.

I am excited for the opportunity to join a multidisciplinary healthcare team that values providing high quality care and empowering patients through education. I am passionate about working with patients with diabetes to provide them with the support and resources they need. In my visits with patients, I focus on building relationships, providing medication education, and evaluating blood glucose data to adjust medications in order to optimize glycemic control and safety. I value my role in teaching and equipping patients so they can be a confident member of their own healthcare team.

**November is National Diabetes Awareness Month.** This is a time that we can intentionally bring awareness and support within our health system, communities, and beyond. It also provides a time to recognize mothers, fathers, friends, coworkers, and children who live everyday with diabetes or prediabetes. Per the CDC and the Diabetes Research Institute Foundation, nearly 40 million Americans live with diabetes and approximately 1.5 million are diagnosed every year. In addition, cost continues to rise, and it is estimated that more than \$410 billion is spent on diabetes-related health care annually in the United States.

This month Breakthrough T1D (formerly JDRF) has a theme “Forward” as a reminder of what and who we are fighting for. This continues to drive their vision and mission to cure, prevent, and treat T1D and its complications. They encourage everyone to wear blue on World Diabetes Day on Thursday, November 14 to show support. In addition, the World Health Organization (WHO) will be having a World Diabetes Day 2024 Webinar on breaking barriers and bridging gaps, see more information listed below\*.

The CDC currently has a Prediabetes Awareness campaign which recently reported that the risk of a shark attack is 1 in 11.5 million and the risk of prediabetes is 1 in 3 adults. Studies show that patients are more likely to make long-term lifestyle changes that can prevent or delay the onset of Type 2 diabetes once they are aware of having prediabetes. The CDC has a one-minute prediabetes risk test for patients, and the link is listed below in the additional resources\*.

**\*Resources:**

- American Diabetes Association <https://diabetes.org/adm>
- Breakthrough T1D: <https://www.breakthrought1d.org/news-and-updates/jdrf-true-blue-national-diabetes-awareness-month/>
- CDC Prediabetes Risk Test: <https://doihaveprediabetes.org/take-the-risk-test#/>
- Diabetes Research Institute: <https://diabetesresearch.org/november/>
- WHO World Diabetes Day Webinar: <https://www.who.int/campaigns/world-diabetes-day/2024>
- World Diabetes Day: <https://worlddiabetesday.org/>



## Diabetes Technology and Trends

### Over The Counter CGMs

By Ashlee Orndroff, APRN-NP

In recent years, continuous glucose monitoring (CGM) systems have transformed diabetes management, providing users with real-time insights into their glucose levels. Two exciting options are now available over-the-counter—Dexcom's Stelo and Abbott's Lingo. These devices not only enhance diabetes care, but also have advantages for improving overall health. These two devices are available to adult individuals with type 2 diabetes not using insulin. These products closely track glucose levels, identify patterns, and provide personalized health coaching. Utilization of these CGMs can help people with living with diabetes make better decisions regarding diet, exercise, and medication management.

Improved glucose management can lead to significant health improvements including reducing diabetes-related complications such as cardiovascular disease, neuropathy, and retinopathy. By empowering people with diabetes to make informed lifestyle choices, these CGM systems can contribute to healthier choices and overall lives. Pricing for these devices can vary based on insurance coverage and out-of-pocket costs.

Dexcom Stelo is available over the counter for \$99 per month or \$89 per month if purchased on Dexcom Stelo website through a subscription. Abbott Lingo will be at similar price point of \$89 per month or \$249 for 3-month supply (roughly \$83 per month). Both systems are available for purchase online and in select pharmacies. Patients can access them directly, bypassing the need for a prescription.

The arrival of innovative diabetes technologies is exciting! I am hopeful to see the introduction of over-the-counter CGM systems like Dexcom Stelo and Abbott Lingo to help people living with diabetes improve their health and feel empowered to make more informed decisions about their diabetes management.



**Dexcom's Stelo**



**Abbott's Lingo**

For more information, please see [www.stelo.com](http://www.stelo.com) and [www.helloingo.com](http://www.helloingo.com).

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## Let's Move More

### Maintaining Motivation for Physical Activity

By Aubrey Hall, RD, CDCES

Getting motivated to start routine physical activity may be easy when setting a goal such as wanting to lose weight or lower A1C. Over time, hitting a roadblock or two may make it difficult to maintain motivation.

Here are some tips to keep you on track when hitting a roadblock in your physical activity routine.

- Practice positive self-talk which means turning negative thoughts into positive thoughts. For example, instead of “I didn’t walk every day last week” say “I walked four out of seven days last week.”
- Keep a record of activity that you do. Keeping a record can help with accountability. It can also help you see patterns that may be helpful in adjusting your routine to be a better fit for your lifestyle.
- Mix up the type of activities that you do. Mixing up your routine provides variety that can make activity more fun and prevent you from getting bored with your exercise. Switching up your activities also allows you to work different muscles which can lower your risk of injury.
- Find a buddy to exercise with. This can help in holding you accountable for your exercise plans. An exercise buddy can also make working out more fun.
- Plan exercise activities that work for you. Choosing activities that you enjoy, that fit into your schedule, and are within your budget will help you be successful in sticking with it.
- Plan ahead by preparing for the weather. Choose activities that you can do outdoors and have a plan for activities indoors when the weather is bad.

**SOURCE:** American Diabetes Association. Health & Wellness. Maintain Your Motivation. <https://diabetes.org/health-wellness/fitness/staying-motivated>



## Healthy Eating

### Cranberry Moscow Mule Mocktail

By Anna Newby, MS, RD, CDCES

Holidays are a time for celebration and fun. Do you ever find yourself wanting a fun holiday drink, but are also trying to avoid high sugar, alcoholic drinks? The ingredients in this low sugar mocktail are packed with antioxidants like vitamin C and polyphenols to help offset oxidative stress and support optimal health. The kombucha and cranberry offer both prebiotics (food for gut bacteria) and probiotics to support GI health.

**Nutrition Facts per 1 serving:** Calories 34, Fat 0g, Carbohydrates 9g, Fiber 2g, Protein 0g

#### Ingredients (Make 1 serving):

¼ cup fresh or frozen cranberries  
3 large basil leaves  
½ lime, quartered  
1 teaspoon thyme leaves  
1 tablespoon 100% ginger juice  
1 cinnamon stick (optional)  
½ cup kombucha (low-sugar variety)  
1 cup of ice  
Splash of sparkling water (about ½ cup)  
Star anise (optional garnish)

#### Directions:

1. In a large mason jar or cocktail shaker, add the cranberries, basil, lime, thyme, ginger juice, and cinnamon stick (if using). Use a muddler or fork to press the juices from the cranberries and limes and release flavor from the herbs.
2. Add the kombucha, along with half of the ice and the star anise (if using). Close the lid and shake or stir to combine.
3. In a large glass, add the remaining ice and pour in the shaken Moscow Mule mixture, including the lime, herbs, and spices.
4. Finish with the sparkling water and enjoy!

For more healthy recipes: visit <https://www.cookingwithcray.com>, and also to sign up for free cooking demo sessions and learn how to cook healthy recipes and more!



SCAN ME