





Gilbert Rodriguez began experiencing pain and a tingling sensation in his feet but dismissed it as regular aches from working so long. It wasn't until he was taken to the emergency room that he discovered he had extremely high sugar levels and had diabetes.

"I lost my younger brother and my mother to diabetes," Gilbert explained. "I thought since I worked hard – I played football, softball, basketball – I thought 'not me.' I'm healthy. I'm always working, always moving around."

Although he was physically active, Gilbert admits that he did not eat healthy and would indulge in excess tortillas, sweet bread and large meal portions. "It's something that I've learned now that I can't do and need to get under control," Gilbert said.

Gilbert expressed it was difficult to change his lifestyle after being diagnosed with diabetes. He said portion control is very important and always watch how much food is on your plate. "You need to be strict," he said, describing his new eating habits. "You need to train your body and slowly adapt to it."

His message the younger generations is to begin taking care of their health by exercising regularly, avoiding unhealthy foods and always watching meal portions. "We need to help every family member to not go through this," Gilbert said.

Diabetes Symptoms

There are no specific symptoms of prediabetes, so you may have it and not know it. Some people with prediabetes might have some of these typical symptoms of diabetes.



HEALTHY RECIPE: STACKED TACO SALAD

chopped (about 8 cups)

1 can (16 ounces) black beans,

1 pound around turkey

INGREDIENTS:

1 package (1-1/4 ounces) dry taco seasoning mix



Source: American Diabetes Association

rinsed and drained

1 cup (4 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese

2 large tomatoes, diced (about 2 cups)

1 head of green leafy lettuce or spinach,

- 1 bag (8 ounces) baked tortilla chips, crushed
- 8 oz. of picante sauce

PREPARATION:

1) In a medium skillet, brown the ground turkey with the taco seasoning mix, stirring to break up the meat; drain and cool.

2) In a large dish or serving bowl, layer half of the lettuce or spinach, then half of the cheese, black beans, ground turkey, and tomatoes. Repeat the layers then top with the crushed tortilla chips. Just before serving, drizzle with the picante sauce and toss to coat the ingredients well.

Reduce Portion Sizes: Serve your meal on a smaller plate. Snack on Veggies: Buy a variety of vegetables when grocery shopping.

Go to your doctor regularly: take advantage of health fairs or services where they may offer free glucose screenings (blood sugar)

Eat Slowly:

20 minutes

to signal to

vour brain

that you

are full

It takes

for your stomach

Rethink Your Drink: Drink water instead of juice or soda.

Steps to Prevent or Delay Diabetes

Keep Track: Keep a food iournal of

what you eat to keep track of when you might overeat or eat foods high in fat or calories

Read the Label: compare food labels on packages and choose foods lower in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, calories, salt and added sugars

REMEMBER, TYPE 2 DIABETES CAN BE PREVENTED OR DELAYED! EVEN THOUGH THE GENES You inherit play a role in the development of type 2 diabetes, they take a back seat to your eating and healthy living habits.

Graphics: Vecteezy.com

Source: National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases

PAGE 2