

Proclamation

- Whereas in the United States, type 2 diabetes is present in more than 11% of adults over 18, and more than 25% of those over 65, affecting over 38 million people¹;*
- Whereas it is predicted that for children born in the United States after the year 2000, as many as 40% will develop type 2 diabetes, with even higher estimates for African American, Hispanic, and Native American children^{2,3};*
- Whereas published evidence reveals the world-wide epidemic of type 2 diabetes affects over half a billion people⁴, and is common where people have been encouraged to adopt a diet of highly processed and predominantly animal-based foods^{5,6};*
- Whereas type 2 diabetes is one of the top risk factors for heart disease^{7,8} and a leading cause of blindness¹, amputation^{9,10}, painful neuropathy¹¹, and kidney failure¹² leading to dialysis and renal transplantation;*
- Whereas most current treatments of type 2 diabetes assume it to be an irreversible chronic illness¹³ which will require ever-increasing levels of medical intervention¹⁴;*
- Whereas the cost of insulin has tripled in the last decade in the United States¹⁵;*
- Whereas in 2022, diabetes resulted in \$413 billion in total economic costs in the United States, with \$307 billion due to direct medical costs¹⁶;*
- Whereas genetics may make type 2 diabetes more likely^{7,18}, the disease is largely a result of diet and lifestyle choices^{19,20}, thus changes in behavior can prevent it from ever occurring^{21,22}, and even reverse it once it has occurred²³⁻²⁵;*
- Whereas many people with type 2 diabetes may be able to reduce or eliminate their medications if they are successfully treated with inexpensive low-tech lifestyle measures²⁶⁻²⁸;*
- Whereas evidence-based lifestyle therapies such as a whole food, plant-based diet and physical activity are far safer and more cost effective than drugs for control of diabetes^{27,29}; and*
- Whereas most people with type 2 diabetes report never being told^{14,30,31} their disease may be prevented, arrested, and even reversed²³⁻²⁵ with a predominantly whole food, plant-based diet³²⁻³⁴ and other lifestyle interventions³⁵⁻³⁷;*

Now therefore be it known that the President and Board of Directors of the American College of Lifestyle Medicine do hereby declare the following:

Diabetes Bill of Rights

You have the right to be fully informed about all treatment options for type 2 diabetes before consenting to treatment.

You have the right to be given accurate, complete, and unbiased information about Type 2 diabetes, pre-diabetes, and insulin resistance, including the benefits of treatment with a predominantly whole food, plant-based diet and other Lifestyle Medicine interventions such as physical activity, sleep hygiene, and stress management.

You have the right to know the full effects of all medications prescribed to you, including the side effects that can accelerate and exacerbate the underlying causes of type 2 diabetes.

You have the right to know that certain foods increase your risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

You have the right to have your type 2 diabetes medications reduced or eliminated, if you undergo lifestyle therapies that successfully treat the underlying causes of your condition.

You have the right to work with doctors and health care professionals who understand the links between lifestyle choices and type 2 diabetes, and who are equipped with the knowledge and strategies to treat and reverse disease through therapeutic lifestyle change.

You have the right to ongoing education on whole food, plant-based nutrition, meal planning, and culinary skills.

You have the right to know that the same diet and lifestyle changes that can prevent, arrest and, often reverse type 2 diabetes may do the same for other chronic conditions—coronary artery disease, obesity, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, arthritis, even some cancers and autoimmune conditions—leading to the best chance of overall good health.



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