

**John  
lost  
10  
pounds  
in five  
months  
and gained  
muscle**

**His  
secret?**

**His wife  
Josephine  
and the  
Internet**



**John Shije** (Santa Clara Pueblo) spent two years thinking about losing weight and becoming healthy with diabetes. He knew the risks of diabetes complications, but didn't make any changes. He smoked, drank alcohol, and didn't exercise...



John and Josephine had just married when he found out he had diabetes. Josephine has helped John by encouraging him to take his insulin as directed, exercise, and eat right. "I'm so proud of him," she says.

**"I didn't nag him. I encouraged him!"**

But he kept thinking, and he kept watching. "Because I had diabetes, I kept noticing people who had it. I noticed people who were like me, in denial. I noticed people were not making changes. They were like me," he says. Then a new thought came into his mind. "I don't want to be another diabetes casualty."

But, more than the fear of diabetes complications, John started seeing the future he wanted. "I want to live a long life. I want to grow old with my wife and not be a burden to her. I want to see my children and grandchildren grow up."

At the time, John didn't know how he could help himself. His wife, Josephine (Pueblo of Laguna), is a Public Health Nurse. "I didn't nag him. I encouraged him!" she laughs. She gave him suggestions on how to be healthy with diabetes.

John remembers, "I had a gut. I didn't do any physical activity. After work, I would come



**"I don't want to be another diabetes casualty."**

John gets rid of stress by making and playing drums. He gets wood from the Santa Clara Mountains, hollows it out, stretches the hide, then paints the drums. Each drum takes about three weeks to make.



home and watch TV. I was always hungry. For lunch, I would eat four ham or bologna sandwiches. I didn't know white bread had so many carbohydrates. I didn't know carbohydrates make blood sugar go up and make you feel hungry. I didn't know that bologna had a lot of fat that makes blood sugar go up."

But his wife made him curious. She told him he could be healthy with diabetes by eating healthy foods, being more active, and losing weight. He wanted to know more. He got on the Internet. "One of my favorite sites is WebMD," he says.

As John's knowledge increased, so did his acceptance. "I realized I had diabetes. It wasn't going to go away. That's when I decided to change my lifestyle."

### Here is what John did

1. Stopped smoking and drinking alcohol
2. Started exercising, usually every day, by walking on a treadmill and lifting weights
3. Started eating more whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and low-fat meats

Since John has become fit, he has heard, "You look like you're in shape. You've trimmed down."

These comments don't embarrass him. "They make me feel good. They make me want to get in better shape," he says.



**"I realized I had diabetes. It wasn't going to go away. That's when I decided to change my lifestyle."**

In five months, John lost ten pounds. He looks like he lost much more because he gained muscle. "I'm glad I don't have the fat hanging off my upper arms," he laughs.

People have noticed. Some say, "You look like you're in shape." The children he works with say, "Hey, Mr. Shije! You're very energetic!"

John knows losing the weight and getting in shape took a long time, and a lot of thought. But he did it. So when he gets compliments, he accepts them. "It makes me feel good. It makes me want to get in better shape."

# Quick Facts About Insulin

John Shije (Santa Clara Pueblo) needed to get his blood sugar under control in order to have gallstone surgery. He was having a hard time lowering his blood sugar. John's health care provider suggested he start using insulin. John started taking insulin right away.

"Some people think insulin is a bad thing," he says. But John didn't. He knew that insulin would help control his blood sugar. He also started working out at a gym and walking on a treadmill.

"I didn't do it to get muscular," explains John. He

says he wanted to give himself every chance to be well with diabetes. Insulin, plus regular exercise, would help him be healthy.

Some people have a different reaction to insulin. Some have fear. Some overcome their fear, and start taking insulin. And others are like John -- they are not afraid of insulin. They know it will help them, and start taking it right when their health care provider prescribes it.

Here are questions and answers about insulin:

**1 What is insulin?** Insulin is a hormone that is made in the pancreas.

**2 What does insulin do?** Insulin lowers blood sugar by allowing sugar to enter the body cells.

**3 Does a person with type 2 diabetes make their own insulin?** Most people with type 2 diabetes make some insulin.

**4 When does a person with type 2 diabetes need insulin?** In some people, the pancreas may not make enough insulin, or their body does not respond well to insulin. They will need to inject insulin.

**5 Can insulin be taken as a pill?** No, insulin must be injected. It cannot be taken as a pill because insulin is destroyed in the stomach.

**6 Is feeling fear of insulin common?** Yes.

**7 Why is fear of insulin common?** There are many myths about insulin. Some people think taking insulin means their diabetes is "getting worse."

**8 Does taking insulin mean your diabetes is getting worse?** No. In many cases, taking insulin makes you better able to control your blood sugar. Controlling blood sugar reduces the risk of complications.

**9 What can a person do if they are afraid of taking insulin?** Talk to a health care provider, a friend, or family member who is taking insulin. Keep talking to people who care. Find out how insulin can help.

**10 How can a person find out more about insulin?** Talk to your diabetes educator or health care provider. Remember, taking insulin can help you control your blood sugar, be healthier, and feel better.



Ask your diabetes educator or health care provider about insulin. For more information about insulin, go to:

[www.diabetes.niddk.nih.gov/dm/pubs/medicines\\_ez/index.htm#medicines](http://www.diabetes.niddk.nih.gov/dm/pubs/medicines_ez/index.htm#medicines)

[www.diabetes.org/type-2-diabetes/insulin.jsp](http://www.diabetes.org/type-2-diabetes/insulin.jsp)



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