

Basketball Legend Earl “The Pearl” Monroe Now Helping People With Diabetes Eat Smart

(NAPSA)—NBA All-Star Earl “The Pearl” Monroe is one of the greatest players in the history of professional basketball. He played for the Baltimore Bullets and the New York Knicks, and was inducted into the Basketball Hall of Fame in 1990.

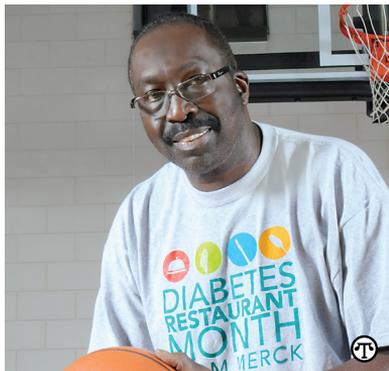
Earl was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes more than 10 years ago and he knows how challenging it can be for the 24 million Americans who suffer from diabetes to manage their disease. Now, Earl has teamed up with Merck on the first-ever Diabetes Restaurant Month program to challenge restaurants to create diabetes-friendly menu items.

More than one-third of Americans’ daily calories come from food eaten outside the home, including sit-down restaurants and fast-food outlets. Sometimes it can be tough to find healthy options when eating out, and for people with type 2 diabetes it can be even more difficult.

Earl has learned how to maintain a diabetes-friendly lifestyle with a healthy diet and regular exercise, and aims to inspire others to do the same by making a few small changes in their daily lives, including making smart choices while dining out.

“As a professional basketball player, I ate many meals on the road and quickly learned how hard it was to stay on a healthy diet,” says the former Baltimore Bullets and New York Knicks star. “With type 2 diabetes it can be even more difficult, but I want to show people that it’s possible to enjoy foods at our favorite restaurants and stay healthy at the same time.”

With these few simple tips available at www.MerckDiabetes.com, people with type 2 diabetes can maintain a diabetes-friendly lifestyle:



- Ask your server how a dish is cooked;
- Request healthy substitutions like steamed veggies instead of french fries;
- Order a side of vegetables in place of rice or potatoes to help keep track of carbohydrates;
- Ask for sauces on the side to avoid excessive amounts of butter, oil, cream and sodium;
- Watch your portion sizes; and
- Get active with at least 150 minutes of physical activity per week, such as walking, water aerobics or bike riding.

People with type 2 diabetes should talk to their doctor about treatment options and other small steps they can take to help make diabetes management a slam dunk! For more information, including Earl’s winning tips on physical activity and healthy restaurant choices, as well as some of Earl’s favorite diabetes-friendly recipes, visit www.MerckDiabetes.com.

One of Earl’s favorites:

Diabetes-Friendly Baked Macaroni and Cheese *(Yields 8 servings)*

Ingredients:

*3 cups whole grain penne rigate

- 1 4-oz. cup fat-free Better’n Eggs
- 2 cups fat-free evaporated milk
- 2 tablespoons margarine (e.g., Promise), melted
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ⅛ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder, optional
- 1 cup grated 75 percent light cheddar cheese
- †1 cup fat-free, non-dairy slices, fine cut

Directions:

Preheat the oven to 350° F.

Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add the penne and cook for 10 minutes or until tender.

Meanwhile, beat together the Better’n Eggs, evaporated milk, melted margarine, Worcestershire sauce, salt and cayenne pepper in a medium-sized bowl.

Drain penne thoroughly. Layer the penne, cheddar and nondairy slices, fine cut in a 1½ quart oven-proof dish, ending with a layer of cheese. Pour the egg mixture over it, and bake for 35 minutes until golden brown and bubbling; serve immediately.

*Pasta suggestions: Racconto 8 Whole Grain Penne Rigate No. 104; Whole Wheat Pasta Elbows No. 52 (both available at Whole Foods).

†Non-dairy slices: Smart Beat Fat Free, Cholesterol Free, Lactose Free American Flavor Slices.

Diabetes Restaurant Month is a program created by Merck to help people with diabetes to better manage their condition. Visit www.MerckDiabetes.com for nutritional advice, exercise tips and flavorful recipes.