

What is Diabetes?



Our bodies turn the food we eat into sugar which is converted to energy. Insulin is made by our pancreas and helps the sugar get into our cells to be used for energy. If this process happens the way it should, the blood sugar is always maintained at a normal level and we have the energy to lead a full and active life.

In a person with diabetes, the sugar cannot get into the cell to be used for energy. Sugar stays in the bloodstream, causing the blood sugar reading to be high.

Types of Diabetes

Type 1 diabetes

The pancreas makes no insulin. People with type 1 diabetes must take insulin shots to live. Less than 10% of the people with diabetes have type 1. This type of diabetes occurs mainly in children, but may also occur in adults.

Type 2 diabetes

The body makes insulin, but it cannot be used properly. Individuals with type 2 may control their blood sugars through meal planning, exercise, oral medications and/or insulin injections. Type 2 diabetes is the most common type, occurring in about 90% of the diabetic population.

Gestational diabetes

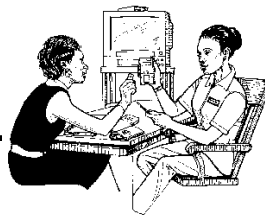
High blood sugar (glucose) that occurs only during pregnancy. It usually goes away after your baby is born.

Other types of diabetes

Results from surgery, drugs, infections, and other illnesses.

You are at greater risk for type 2 diabetes if:

- * are over 40 years of age
- * have a family history of diabetes
- * have had diabetes during a pregnancy
- * have had a baby weighing over 9 pounds
- * have the stress of an illness or injury
- * are of African American, Hispanic, or Native American descent
- * are overweight
- * have high blood pressure



Treatment Tools

Education - learning what to do
Medications - taking oral medication or insulin as directed
Self-Monitoring - checking blood sugar levels
Meal Planning - choosing the right foods in the right amounts
Activity - helping your body work better

