



HealthyPeople

UNDERSTANDING DIABETES

Diabetes is a condition that causes your blood glucose (sugar) levels to rise higher than normal. Type 2 diabetes is the most common form of diabetes. If you have type 2 diabetes your body does not use insulin properly. This is called insulin resistance. At first, your pancreas makes extra insulin to make up for it. But, over time it isn't able to keep up and can't make enough insulin to keep your blood glucose at normal levels.

There is no cure for diabetes, but it can be managed. Balancing the food you eat with exercise and medicine (if prescribed) will help you control your weight and can keep your blood glucose in the healthy range.

There are several tests used to diagnose diabetes. Each test usually needs to be repeated on a second day to diagnose diabetes.

The A1C Test—This test measures your average blood glucose for the past 2 to 3 months. The advantages of being diagnosed this way are that you don't have to fast or drink anything. Diabetes is diagnosed at an A1C of greater than or equal to 6.5%.

Oral Glucose Tolerance Test (also called the OGTT)—The OGTT is a two-hour test that checks your blood glucose levels before and 2 hours after you drink a special sweet drink. It tells the doctor how your body processes glucose. Diabetes is diagnosed at 2 hour blood glucose of greater than or equal to 200 mg/dl.

Random (also called Casual) Plasma Glucose Test—This test is a blood check at any time of the day when you have severe diabetes symptoms. Diabetes is diagnosed at blood glucose of greater than or equal to 200 mg/dl.



QUESTIONS AND PREVENTION

What is Prediabetes?

Before people develop type 2 diabetes, they almost always have "prediabetes" — blood glucose levels that are higher than normal but not yet high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes. Doctors sometimes refer to prediabetes as impaired glucose tolerance (IGT) or impaired fasting glucose (IFG), depending on what test was used when it was detected. This condition puts you at a higher risk for developing type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

No Clear Symptoms

There are no clear symptoms of prediabetes, so, you may have it and not know it. Some people with prediabetes may have some of the symptoms of diabetes or even problems from diabetes already. You usually find out that you have prediabetes when being tested for diabetes. If you have prediabetes, you should be checked for type 2 diabetes every one to two years.

Preventing Type 2 Diabetes

You will not develop type 2 diabetes automatically if you have prediabetes. For some people with prediabetes, early treatment can actually return blood glucose levels to the normal range. Research shows that you can lower your risk for type 2 diabetes by 58% by:

- Losing 7% of your body weight (or 15 pounds if you weigh 200 pounds).
- Exercising moderately (such as brisk walking) 30 minutes a day, five days a week.
- Don't worry if you can't get to your ideal body weight. Losing even 10 to 15 pounds can make a huge difference.

Source: www.diabetes.org