

Diabetes: Just the Basics

Type 2 Diabetes

Diabetes is a condition in which the level of sugar in your blood is too high. Insulin helps your body lower your blood sugar. Too much sugar in the blood isn't good for your health. Many people with type 2 diabetes also have high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and overweight. Treating these conditions is as important as controlling blood sugar in type 2 diabetes.

When you have type 2 diabetes, your body does not make enough insulin and does not use the insulin as well as it should. Your body may not make enough insulin. The blood sugar then builds up in the blood instead of going into the cells. This can lead to serious problems of the heart, eyes, kidneys and feet.

| | Fasting Blood Sugar Levels for Diagnosis | A1C Range |
|---------------------|--|-----------|
| Normal | <100 | <5.7% |
| Pre-Diabetes | 100-125 | 5.7%-6.4% |
| Diabetes | ≥ 126 | ≥6.5% |

People with type 2 diabetes may be able to control the blood sugar levels with a diet and exercise program. However, most people with type 2 diabetes will need pills or insulin to manage their blood sugar levels, especially if they have had type 2 diabetes for a long time. Type 2 diabetes is usually found in older adults and is now being found in younger adults. It used to be called adult-onset diabetes. About 90% of all people with diabetes have type 2.

Factors leading to Type 2 diabetes

- Being overweight
- Being inactive
- Ethnic background (People who are African-American, Asian, Portuguese, Hispanic and Native American have a higher risk of getting type 2 diabetes)
- Family history of type 2 diabetes
- Having diabetes during pregnancy

Symptoms of Type 2 diabetes may include:

- Thirst
- Increase in urination (the amount of urine you pass and how often)
- Hunger
- Feeling tired
- Blurry vision
- No symptoms

Treatment of Type 2 diabetes

- Lose weight (if overweight); *Even a 10-pound weight loss can help keep your diabetes in control.*
- Eat healthy
- Check your blood sugar as directed by your healthcare provider
- Be physically active
- Take medications, if prescribed by your healthcare provider
- If you smoke, stop!
- Control your blood pressure and your cholesterol

