

Diabetes

What Is Diabetes?

Diabetes, often referred to by doctors as diabetes mellitus, describes a group of metabolic diseases in which the person has high blood glucose (blood sugar), either because insulin production is inadequate, or because the body's cells do not respond properly to insulin, or both. There are two types of diabetes:



1) Type 1 Diabetes

The body does not produce insulin. Some people may refer to this type as insulin-dependent diabetes, juvenile diabetes, or early-onset diabetes. People usually develop type 1 diabetes before their 40th year, often in early adulthood or teenage years. Type 1 diabetes is nowhere near as common as type 2 diabetes. Approximately 10% of all diabetes cases are type 1. Patients with type 1 diabetes will need to take insulin injections for the rest of their life. They must also ensure proper blood-glucose levels by carrying out regular blood tests and following a special diet.

2) Type 2 Diabetes

The body does not produce enough insulin for proper function, or the cells in the body do not react to insulin (insulin resistance). Approximately 90% of all cases of diabetes worldwide are of this type. Some people may be able to control their type 2 diabetes symptoms by losing weight, following a healthy diet, doing plenty of exercise, and monitoring their blood glucose levels.

Signs and Symptoms of Diabetes

The following symptoms of diabetes are typical. However, some people with Type 2 diabetes have symptoms so mild that they go unnoticed.

Common symptoms of diabetes:

- Urinating often
- Feeling very thirsty
- Feeling very hungry - even though you are eating
- Extreme fatigue
- Blurry vision
- Cuts/bruises that are slow to heal
- Weight loss - even though you are eating more (type 1)
- Tingling, pain, or numbness in the hands/feet (type 2)

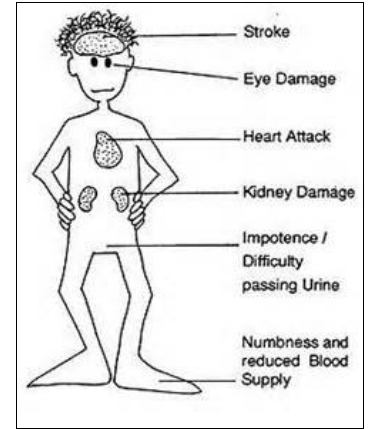


Diabetes, continued

How Diabetes Effects Your Body

Long-term complications of diabetes develop gradually. The longer you have diabetes — and the less controlled your blood sugar — the higher the risk of complications. Eventually, diabetes complications may be disabling or even life-threatening. Possible complications include:

- Cardiovascular disease
- Nerve damage (neuropathy)
- Eye damage (retinopathy)
- Kidney damage (nephropathy)
- Foot damage
- Skin and mouth conditions
- Osteoporosis
- Alzheimer's disease
- Cancer



Managing and Preventing Diabetes

Diabetes is a serious disease. Following your diabetes treatment plan takes round-the-clock commitment. Careful management of diabetes can reduce your risk of serious — even life-threatening — complications. Make a commitment to managing your diabetes. Choose healthy foods and maintain a healthy weight. Make physical activity part of your daily routine. Type 1 diabetes can't be prevented. However, the same healthy lifestyle choices that help treat pre-diabetes and type 2 diabetes can help prevent them. The main ways to help prevent the development of type 2 diabetes includes:

- Eating healthy foods
- Getting more physical activity
- Losing excess weight

