

Living Well/Aging Well

Diabetes Safety & Management



AMERICAN OSTEOPATHIC ASSOCIATION

What is diabetes and why should I be concerned?

Diabetes is a health problem that stays with you for a long time. It changes how your body uses the food you eat for energy.

When you eat, your body changes most of the food into sugar called glucose. This sugar goes into your blood. If too much sugar is in your blood, your pancreas sends out insulin. Insulin is like a key that helps the sugar go into your body's cells to give you energy.

If your body does not make enough insulin, cannot use it right, or your cells do not listen to it, then too much sugar stays in your blood. This can lead to serious health issues like heart problems, trouble seeing and hearing, chronic kidney disease, nerve damage, and other problems with feet, oral health, and mental health.



Source: https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/about/?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/basics/diabetes.html

Source: https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/complications/?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/managing/problems.html.

What is prediabetes?

Before having type 2 diabetes, many people have prediabetes. This means their blood sugar is higher than normal but not high enough for diabetes. You might have prediabetes for a long time without knowing it because there are no clear signs. It often gets noticed only when serious health problems like type 2 diabetes come up. If you have things that put you at risk for prediabetes, it's important to talk to your doctor about testing your blood sugar. The good news is, you can make changes to turn prediabetes around.

NOTE: If you have been screened and your glucose test is normal, it is recommended that you receive screening every 3 years.

Source: <https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/uspstf/recommendation/screening-for-prediabetes-and-type-2-diabetes>

Source: https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/prevention-type-2/prediabetes-prevent-type-2.html?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/basics/prediabetes.html

Who is at risk of developing diabetes?

Some people have a higher chance of getting diabetes. Here are some things that can increase your risk of developing diabetes:

- If your mom, dad, brother, or sister has type 2 diabetes, it might affect you too.
- If you are 35 to 70 years old.

Source: <https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/uspstf/recommendation/screening-for-prediabetes-and-type-2-diabetes>

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- If you have more weight than you should. Your body mass index (BMI) is greater than 25 for women and 30 for men.
- If you do not move around much (less than 3 times a week).
- If your mom had diabetes while she was pregnant with you or if you were a big baby (over 9 pounds), it might make diabetes more likely for you.
- If you are African American, Hispanic or Latino, American Indian, Alaska Native, some Pacific Islanders or Asian American.
 - If you are Asian American, your risk for developing diabetes increases if your body mass index is greater than 23.

Source: <https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/uspstf/recommendation/screening-for-prediabetes-and-type-2-diabetes>

- If you have non-alcoholic fatty liver disease.
- If you are a smoker.

Source: https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/risk-factors/?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/basics/risk-factors.html

When should I receive a diabetes screening?

If you notice any of these things, it is important to talk to your doctor. They can help you find out if you need a blood sugar test.

- Urinate (pee) a lot, often at night.
- Are very thirsty.
- Lose weight without trying.
- Are very hungry.
- Have blurry vision.
- Have numb or tingling hands or feet.
- Feel very tired.
- Have very dry skin.
- Have sores that heal slowly.
- Have more infections than usual.



Source: https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/signs-symptoms/?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/basics/symptoms.html

Optimal Sleep

Research has shown that sleep is essential to health and recovery. During sleep, the body recovers, repairs, and “takes out the trash.” A consistent lack of sleep is a step towards ill health and promotion of weight gain. Certain sleep conditions can negatively impact health. One such sleep condition known as sleep apnea reduces airway flow. This restriction impacts the body’s ability to receive oxygen and causes risk for other medical conditions. Weight gain can trigger sleep apnea. Speak with your physician to learn more about available testing options for this condition if you are concerned about the quality of your sleep.

How do I prevent developing diabetes?

You can lower your risk of developing diabetes if you make healthy changes to your life like losing weight, eating healthy foods, exercising regularly, managing stress, and staying motivated.

Source: https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/prevention-type-2/prediabetes-prevent-type-2.html?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/basics/prediabetes.html

My doctor told me that I'm diabetic. How do I manage my diabetes?

- Make sure to visit your healthcare team regularly. Your team includes your main doctor, foot doctor, eye doctor, nutrition expert called a registered dietician, nutritionist, diabetes teacher, and pharmacist. Tell your family and other important people in your life about your condition so they can support you when you need it.
- Eat a healthy diet. https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/healthy-eating/?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/managing/eat-well.html
- Stay active.
- Take your medications as prescribed.
- Check your blood sugar regularly.
https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/treatment/?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/managing/manage-blood-sugar.html
 - You should check your blood sugar if you take insulin, are pregnant, have a hard time reaching your blood glucose targets, have low blood glucose levels, have low blood glucose levels without the usual warning signs, have ketones (acid) from high blood glucose levels. Check your blood glucose by poking your fingertip and using a blood glucose meter or a continuous glucose monitor (CGM).
Source: <https://diabetes.org/living-with-diabetes/treatment-care/checking-your-blood-sugar>
For more information on diabetes technology: <https://pro.aace.com/disease-state/diabetes-technology>.
- Get enough sleep.
Source: https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/about/about-type-2-diabetes.html?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/basics/type2.html
Source: <https://medlineplus.gov/lab-tests/ketones-in-blood/#:~:text=Ketones%20are%20acids%20that%20your,This%20process%20produces%20ketones>
- The CDC Kickstart videos, made by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, give you 7 simple videos that show you how to take care of yourself and handle diabetes step by step.
 1. Healthy Eating: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3PZQSSpprfM>
 2. Being Active: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IDcJuxYrT6s>
 3. Monitoring: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=38Tg6ubyJCO>
 4. Taking Medicines: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bJ-tDPgzYDY>
 5. Lowering Risk: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1GXh2fvdoRY>
 6. Managing Stress: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZQwGKEa_MkM
 7. Solving Problems: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GDJQWolrjaA>

Source: https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/diabetes-tv/diabetes-kickstart.html?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/diabetestv/diabetes-kickstart.html

What is insulin?

Insulin is a vital hormone you cannot survive without. Insulin regulates your blood sugar (glucose) in the body. When your body does not make enough insulin, cannot use it right, or your cells do not listen to it, then too much sugar stays in your blood and you become insulin resistant which leads to becoming a diabetic. When your doctor tells you that you have diabetes, they might give you insulin to help control it.

Source: https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/about/4-ways-to-take-insulin.html?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/basics/type-1-4-ways-to-take-insulin.html

What is hypoglycemia?

Low blood sugar, called hypoglycemia, happens when your blood sugar drops below 70 mg/dL, which can be risky if you do not treat it. It is more likely to happen to people with type 1 diabetes, those who have had diabetes for 5-10 years or more, or those who take certain

medicines, like beta blockers for high blood pressure. If you notice any of these signs, check your blood sugar levels. If it is between 55-69 mg/dL, you can use the 15-15 rule: eat 15 grams of carbs, then check your blood sugar again after 15 minutes. Do it again if your numbers are still too low. Tell your primary doctor about your blood sugar levels.

- Fast heartbeat
- Shaking
- Sweating
- Nervousness or anxiety
- Irritability or confusion
- Dizziness
- Hunger

Source: The 15-15 Rule: https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/treatment/treatment-low-blood-sugar-hypoglycemia.html?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/basics/low-blood-sugar-treatment.html

Source: How To Treat Low Blood Sugar (Hypoglycemia): https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/treatment/treatment-low-blood-sugar-hypoglycemia.html?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/basics/low-blood-sugar-treatment.html

How do I manage my medicine?

- Take your medicines like your doctor says. If you have any new problems, forget to take your medicine, have trouble swallowing it, change your diet, are pregnant or breastfeeding, or cannot pay for your medicine, tell your pharmacist and doctor.
- Fill your medicines at least 1-week before you run out. If possible, get a 90-day prescription from your primary doctor.
- Make a list of all your medicines, including things you can buy without a prescription like vitamins or cold medicine. Keep a copy in your wallet. Some of these might affect your other medicines.
- Talk to your pharmacist. They are easy to talk to and generally available all day, even on weekends. You can go see them or call them. Ask about your medicine and tell them about any new health problems or test results from your dentist, eye doctor, foot doctor, or other doctors.

Source: https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/articles/diabetes-and-your-medicines.html?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/library/factsheets/diabetes-and-medicine.html

What are drug interactions ?

People with diabetes often take many different medicines for diabetes and for other conditions, like heart disease, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol. Some medicines are safe by themselves but when mixed with other medicine, can cause an adverse reaction to your body. Contact your primary doctor if you develop problems that you did not have before taking your medicine such as nausea, diarrhea, itching, or a rash.

Source: https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/articles/diabetes-and-your-medicines.html?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/library/factsheets/diabetes-and-medicine.html

How do I dispose of my needles?

There are several ways to get rid of your needles/sharps.

- Place your needles and other sharp items in a disposable container immediately after you have used them.

- Always keep a small travel-size needle/sharps disposable container with you.
- Contact your local trash removal service or health department to learn how to dispose of your needles/sharps.
- [How to Get Rid of a Sharps Container: Printable Version \(PDF - 136KB\)](#)

For more information about your state, call “Safe Needle Disposal” at (800) 643-1643 or email them at nfo@safeneedledisposal.org.

Source: Best Way to Get Rid of Used Needles and Other Sharps: <https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/safely-using-sharps-needles-and-syringes-home-work-and-travel/best-way-get-rid-used-needles-and-other-sharps>