

Health Promotion in Motion

November is Diabetes Month

In recent years, diabetes has moved into the spotlight. That's because many American adults have diabetes – and the numbers continue to rise.

- In 1997, 5 out of every 100 adults had diabetes.
- In 2007, 8 out of every 100 adults had diabetes.

If this trend continues, 1 out of every 3 people born in this century will develop diabetes.



Are You At Risk?

Many people have diabetes but don't know it.

To find out if you are at risk for diabetes, answer these questions from the American Diabetes Association.

1. Write down the points for each "yes" answer:

Points

Were either of your parents diagnosed with diabetes? 1

Do you have a brother or sister with diabetes? 1

If you are a woman, have you had a baby who weighed more than 9 pounds at birth?..... 1

Are you overweight?..... 5

If you do not know, calculate your BMI at this website: www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi

Are you between 45 and 64 years of age? 5

Are you under 65 years of age and get little or no exercise?..... 5

Are you 65 or older?..... 9

2. Add up your points.

- If you scored 10 or more points, you are at high risk for having diabetes.
- If you scored 3-9 points, you are probably at low risk, but do not forget about it. Keep active, eat fruits and vegetables, and keep your weight under control.

3. If you think you are at risk, check with your health care provider.

Prediabetes

One in four adults have prediabetes – more than those with diabetes. People with prediabetes have blood sugars that are between normal and diabetes levels. Not everyone with prediabetes develops diabetes. If you have prediabetes, it is a warning that you may be on the road to diabetes. You may need to change your lifestyle.

What Is Diabetes?

People with diabetes have trouble using the sugar in their blood for energy. Normally, insulin (a hormone made in the pancreas) carries sugar from the blood into the cells.

People with diabetes either do not make enough insulin or they cannot use insulin well. Many people with diabetes have both problems. Because the sugar cannot get into the cells, it stays in the blood vessels. The extra sugar may cause problems such as:

- Blindness
- Kidney failure
- Loss of feeling in the hands and feet
- Dental problems
- Infections
- Increased risk for heart attacks and strokes



What Can I Do?

You Can Prevent Diabetes

- Maintain a healthy weight.
- If you are overweight, modest changes in eating habits and increases in physical activity can lead to a 5-10% weight loss. This can be enough to change your health status.
- Eat healthy foods in reasonable portions.
- Try to get 30 minutes of activity (walking, yard work, gardening) per day, most days of the week.
- Seek support from family members. They can help you follow your healthy living plans.

You Can Delay the Complications of Diabetes

Follow the advice of your doctor or diabetes educator. It will help you live a long and healthy life. They may recommend:

- Take your medications.
- Have your blood sugar tested with a glucose meter daily and with the A1c test 2-4 times each year.
- Have regular eye, feet, teeth, and kidney exams.
- Get enough sleep.
- Eat healthy foods.
- Stay physically active.
- If you smoke, call the free support line (1-800-TRY-TO-STOP). They can help you quit. Quitting smoking may be the best change you can make for your health.
- Avoid secondhand smoke.
- Seek support from family members. They can help you follow your healthy living plans.

