

LivingRight®

Your Health and Wellness Awareness Bulletin

July 2017

Diabetes

Many don't recognize symptoms of diabetes









It's undeniable that diabetes has a negative impact on a person's health – it can lead to serious problems including kidney failure, lower limb amputations, and blindness.

In addition, a person with diabetes is twice as likely to have heart disease or a stroke as a person without diabetes.

Yet many of those with diabetes, or who are at high risk for type 2 diabetes, are unaware that they have or could develop the disease.

A report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) points out that 1 out of every 4 people with diabetes do not know they have the condition. A lack of awareness of prediabetes is even more common: 90 percent of people with prediabetes do not realize they have blood sugar levels higher than normal, but not yet high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes.

Symptoms of diabetes include:

- | | |
|---|--|
|  Frequent urination |  Sores that are slow to heal |
|  Excessive thirst or hunger |  Very dry skin |
|  Extreme fatigue |  Tingling, pain, or numbness in the hands or feet |
|  Sudden vision changes |  Unexplained weight loss |

A person with type 2 diabetes often develops these symptoms over several years. They may be so mild that they go unnoticed until diabetes-related health problems emerge. A person with Type 1 diabetes, on the other hand, typically develops these symptoms within a matter of weeks.

It is not currently possible to prevent type 1 diabetes, which most often develops in children and young adults. However, type 2 diabetes can often be prevented or delayed through weight management, regular physical activity, and a healthy diet.

By the numbers

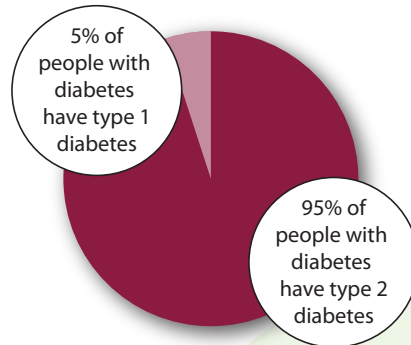
More than **29 million** Americans have diabetes.

More than **86 million** Americans have prediabetes, which increases their risk of developing type 2 diabetes and other chronic health conditions.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



Type 1 and Type 2 Diabetes



High blood sugar level brings diabetes

Diabetes occurs when your blood glucose (also referred to as blood sugar) is too high. Blood glucose gives your body energy and comes from sugars and starches in the food we eat.

With the help of insulin, a hormone made by the pancreas, glucose from food enters cells to be used for energy. If your body doesn't make enough insulin or can't use it effectively, blood glucose builds up, which can lead to serious health problems.

The most common types of diabetes are type 1, type 2, and gestational. Studies have shown that family history and environmental factors play a role in types 1 and 2.

Type 1 – The body does not make enough insulin. Type 1 usually is diagnosed in children and young adults, though it can develop at any age. People with type 1 must take insulin every day.

Type 2 – The body does not make or use insulin well. It can develop at any age, although it typically occurs in middle-aged and older people. Many cases can be delayed or prevented through exercise and weight loss.

Gestational – Develops only during pregnancy. If left untreated, it can cause serious complications such as preeclampsia, birth-related trauma, and birth defects. It's believed that hormonal changes, as well as genetic and lifestyle factors, play a role in gestational diabetes.

Prediabetes – The blood sugar level is higher than normal, although it is not high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes. A person who is overweight and not active is at a higher risk of developing prediabetes.



Are you at risk for type 2 diabetes?

Some of the risk factors for type 2 diabetes relate to a person's lifestyle and can be controlled. Others relate to things a person cannot control, such as age, ethnicity, and family history.

Understanding the risks can be the first step in preventing type 2 diabetes. If you have one or more of the risk factors listed, talk to your doctor about having your blood sugar tested.

Risk Factors

- Obesity
- Sedentary lifestyle
- High blood pressure (140/90 or higher)
- Abnormal cholesterol levels (HDL "good" cholesterol 35 or lower, or triglycerides 250 or higher)
- Being 45 years old or older
- Family history of diabetes
- History of gestational diabetes
- Heritage (African American, American Indian, Asian American, Pacific Islander, or Hispanic/Latino)

Number of People Diagnosed
with Diabetes
(in millions)



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Blood sugar control more difficult for night shift workers

People with type 2 diabetes who work at night find it more challenging to control blood sugar levels, a new study shows.

Average blood sugar levels for night shift workers were significantly higher than the levels for those who worked during the day or who were unemployed, research supported by the Endocrine Society of Thailand and Mahidol University found.

The link between the night shift and blood sugar control was present even when researchers adjusted their analysis for sleep duration, diet, and body mass index.

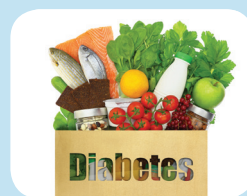
People with diabetes who work at night should be especially careful to eat right, exercise, and take medications prescribed by their physician, researchers noted.



Lower your risk

Following a healthier lifestyle can help prevent type 2 diabetes. To decrease your chances of developing the disease:

- **Eat well.** Choose a variety of fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy, and lean meats. Watch your portion size to reduce your calorie intake.
- **Exercise.** Get a minimum of 30 minutes of moderate physical activity at least five days a week. Talk to your health care provider before starting any new exercise program.
- **Lose weight.** Diet and exercise resulting in a 5 to 7 percent loss of your weight can delay and potentially prevent type 2 diabetes, the CDC reports.



Living with type 1 diabetes

While there is no known way to prevent type 1 diabetes, there are ways to delay or prevent complications.

Blood sugar needs to be managed, so people with type 1 diabetes need to test their blood sugar level and take insulin every day. Testing makes a person aware of blood sugar levels, and also helps a person detect which foods and activities raise or lower blood sugar.

Eating healthy foods, exercising regularly, and maintaining a healthy weight can also help a person manage type 1 diabetes and keep the blood sugar level close to normal.



Next month:
Dental Health



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