



TAKECHARGE

WELCOA'S SELF-CARE BULLETIN

Diabetes: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

November is National Diabetes Month, a time when communities across the country team up to bring attention to diabetes. And it's all for good reason. Diabetes is one of the most common health conditions around the world and in the United States. The World Health Organization cites that in the U.S. more than 34 million people have diabetes (about 1 in 10), and approximately 90-95% of them have type 2 diabetes.) The World Health Organization cites that the number of people with diabetes rose from 108 million in 1980 to 422 million in 2014. *National Diabetes Statistics Report* for 2020 cases of diabetes have risen to an estimated 34.2 million.

Diabetes is a serious disease that happens when your body has trouble managing and using blood glucose, a sugar that your body uses as fuel. Type 2 diabetes, also known as adult-onset diabetes, is the most common form of diabetes. Research and advancements in technology have improved diagnosis, treatment, and overall knowledge about type 2 diabetes. You may have heard or read about type 2 diabetes, but you might be surprised by some of the key facts and to familiarize yourself with.

You can have diabetes for years and not even know it. Many people with type 2 diabetes may not experience any symptoms. Or if they do, they may attribute it to something else, like stress.

COMMON SYMPTOMS OF DIABETES INCLUDE:

- » Urinating often
- » Feeling very thirsty



Talk with your doctor if you have any concerns about your health.

- » Feeling very hungry—even though you are eating
- » Extreme fatigue
- » Blurry vision
- » Cuts/bruises that are slow to heal
- » Tingling, pain, or numbness in the hands/feet

Do not try to diagnose yourself if you think you might have diabetes. Testing equipment that you can buy over the counter, such as a blood glucose meter, cannot diagnose diabetes. Anyone 45 or older should get tested for diabetes, especially if you're overweight. If you're overweight and under 45, you may still want to consider being tested, since being overweight is a risk factor for type 2 diabetes.

There's no cure, but it can be managed. Diabetes is a chronic disease with no cure, so it takes careful

management and possibly medication to keep blood sugar levels within a targeted range. Two important ways to control type 2 diabetes are to eat well and exercise regularly. Some basic things you can do to help prevent and/or manage type 2 diabetes include:

- » Maintaining a healthy weight
- » Getting 30 minutes of regular, moderately intense physical activity daily, or vigorous exercise three days a week
- » Limiting sugared drinks and saturated fats in your diet
- » Adding more fruits and vegetables to your diet
- » Avoiding tobacco use, which increases the risk of diabetes and cardiovascular disease

It's a serious disease that can lead to life-threatening complications if not well-managed.

If diabetes is left undiagnosed and untreated for too long, it can lead to life-threatening complications. Those who know they have diabetes, but fail to make lifestyle changes and follow a doctor's treatment plan also face these dire risks.

- » Adults with diabetes are nearly twice as likely to die from heart disease or stroke as people without diabetes. This is because over time, high blood glucose from diabetes can damage your blood vessels and the nerves that control your heart.
- » In addition to cardiovascular disease, diabetic eye disease, kidney disease, nerve damage, and hearing loss are among the major complications people with type 2 diabetes face.
- » Maintaining a close watch on blood sugar levels, cholesterol, and blood pressure are extremely important in lowering these risks.
- » Early detection and treatment, a healthy lifestyle, and regular checkups are key. To be sure, the steps you take to manage your diabetes can also help lower your chances of any serious complications.



SOURCES:

<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/diabetes>

<https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/basics/type2.html>