

# DIABETES TYPE 2

## BASIC INFORMATION

### DESCRIPTION

Diabetes is a chronic condition in which the body is not able to control the amount of glucose (a form of sugar) in the blood. Glucose is needed by the body to produce energy, but too much glucose leads to serious problems. Glucose levels are normally controlled by the hormone insulin, which is produced in the pancreas. With diabetes, there is either not enough insulin produced or the body is unable to use the insulin that is produced. There are two main types of diabetes, type 1 and type 2. Type 2 is the most common type (about 90% to 95% of people with diabetes). It was known as non-insulin dependent diabetes. It often affects people over age 40.

### FREQUENT SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

Many people don't know they have diabetes. There may be no symptoms or symptoms develop gradually.

Fatigue and excess thirst.

General ill feeling, increased appetite, weight loss, and frequent urination .

Slow healing of cuts and bruises.

Blurred vision.

Impotence (erectile dysfunction).

Increased risk of infections.

### CAUSES

The pancreas may produce enough insulin, but, for unknown reasons, the body is unable to use it effectively (insulin resistance). After several years, insulin production decreases and glucose builds up in the blood.

### RISK INCREASES WITH

Family history of diabetes.

Older age .

Gestational diabetes (diabetes during pregnancy).

Overweight, especially with fat around the abdomen.

High blood pressure; high cholesterol or triglycerides.

Sedentary lifestyle (lack of physical activity).

Metabolic syndrome (a set of conditions).

Racial groups (blacks, Native Americans, Hispanic Americans, Pacific Islanders, and Asian Americans).

Impaired glucose tolerance.

### PREVENTIVE MEASURES

None specific. Control risk factors where possible.

### EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Good blood glucose control (with lifestyle changes and/or drugs) can help prevent or delay complications.

### POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

Cardiovascular (heart and blood vessel) disease.

Kidney damage; blindness; and nerve damage.

Hypoglycemia (low blood sugar), hyperglycemia (high blood sugar), or ketoacidosis (severe reaction).

Poor blood flow leads to gangrene and amputation.

## DIAGNOSIS & TREATMENT

### GENERAL MEASURES

Your health care provider will do a physical exam and ask questions about your symptoms. Medical tests include blood glucose and urine studies. A glucose tolerance test may be done. A hemoglobin A1C (HbA1c) may be done as a follow-up. This test measures average blood glucose levels for the past 2 to 3 months.

Type 2 diabetes is treated with lifestyle changes (exercise, weight loss, diet changes) along with drug therapy, if needed. A diabetes educator can help you learn to manage your diabetes.

Learn to self-monitor your blood sugar and monitor regularly. Learn the symptoms of high and low blood glucose levels and what to do. Keep glucose tablets handy for treating low blood sugar, if needed.

Get regular foot care and regular eye check ups.

Exercise daily; don't smoke; eat healthy; get to ideal weight; control blood pressure, cholesterol, and stress.

Wear a medical alert type bracelet or neck tag to indicate you have diabetes and the drugs you take.

Get medical care for any infection.

To learn more: American Diabetes Association, 1701 North Beauregard St., Alexandria, VA 22311; (800) 342-2383; website: [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org).

## **MEDICATIONS**

One or more types of oral antidiabetic drugs may be prescribed. The options will be explained to you. Insulin may be prescribed if oral drugs are not effective.

Aspirin (for adults), cholesterol-lowering drugs, and drugs for high blood pressure may also be prescribed.

## **ACTIVITY**

Daily exercise helps control diabetes. Follow your health care provider's advice about an exercise plan.

## **DIET**

Healthy diet is important. Don't skip meals. Lose weight if overweight. A dietitian can help with meal plans.

## **NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IF**

You or a family member has symptoms of diabetes.

After diagnosis, any symptoms cause you concern or problems occur with glucose control.