

INSPIRED

To Make Healthy Choices

More than 1.4 million Americans are diagnosed with diabetes each year.

The risk of developing type 2 diabetes increases with age.

CDC estimates that close to **86 million US adults have prediabetes and 90% of them don't know it.** This means that there is an opportunity to prevent getting diabetes by taking a few steps.

First step is to **evaluate your risk** by going to **doihaveprediabetes.org** and taking a short survey. This will assist you in figuring out whether you need to go to your doctor and get a blood test to check your A1C and fasting glucose levels.

Why is that important? **Diabetes impacts nearly every part of the body.** Latest studies show that if you have diabetes:

- You are more likely to be diagnosed with dementia.
- **Six out of ten people have nerve damage** that can cause problems like numbness, burning, tingling and pain in the feet or hands.
- The risk of heart attack or stroke is **two to four times higher.**
- It is the leading cause of kidney failure.
- It causes **60% of foot and leg amputations** that are not caused by accidents.
- It can cause blurry vision, spots or other symptoms and can lead to blindness.

Diabetes 101: When food is eaten, it is changed into fats, proteins or **carbohydrates**. When carbohydrates are digested, they change into sugar or **glucose**. Glucose travels from the stomach through the bloodstream to the muscles and fat cells. **It is the main source of fuel for our bodies.** But sugar cannot enter the cells without the help of **insulin**, a hormone that is produced by the pancreas. **Insulin unlocks the muscle and fat cells allowing sugar to enter.** If the pancreas does not produce enough insulin to match the sugar entering the blood stream or if the body's cells do not respond to the insulin the body is producing, the cells remain closed. This causes the sugar to back up in the blood stream, leading to elevated blood sugar levels. This is **diabetes**.

Type 1 Diabetes: The body does not produce insulin at all.

Type 2 Diabetes: The body does not make enough insulin or the body cannot use the insulin immediately.

A majority of people with type 2 diabetes initially have prediabetes. Their blood glucose levels are higher than normal, but not high enough to merit a diabetes diagnosis. The cells in their body are becoming resistant to insulin. Anyone who has **prediabetes** should be checked for type 2 diabetes every one to two years.

The good news is that those who have prediabetes can cut their risk of getting diabetes in half with a healthy diet and exercise.

Research shows that you can lower your risk for type 2 diabetes by 58% by:

- Losing 7% of your body weight (about 15 pounds if you weigh 200 pounds).
- Exercising moderately (such as brisk walking) 30 minutes a day, five days a week.

Studies continue to show that life style changes are more effective than drugs. The changes include **increasing the activity level** to lose weight and **adjusting the diet to minimize sugar and unhealthy carbohydrates**, such as cookies, ice cream, white bread, pizza and French fries. It's important to be screened regularly to rule out diabetes or to catch it early and begin treating it. People who are overweight, have a close relative with type 2 diabetes or are of Middle Eastern, African or South Asian descent have a higher risk of developing diabetes.

Be proactive and ask to be tested if your risk is high. Taking charge of your health by staying active and making healthy food choices may prevent this disease.

Diabetes causes more deaths a year than breast cancer and AIDS combined.

For more information:
PREVENTING DIABETES
www.guideinc.org

If you have diabetes, get help, get informed & get active.

