



Diabetes

What is diabetes?



Diabetes is a disease in which you have too much sugar in your blood. It happens when your body does not make enough of a hormone called insulin. It can also happen when your body does not correctly use the insulin.

Insulin is a chemical made in your body. It moves sugars from your blood to your cells. The sugar is stored for energy when you need it.

What does diabetes do?

Diabetes affects blood vessels all over the body.

Signs of diabetes are:

- feeling tired or sleepy often
- needing to pee often
- numb or tingling hands or feet
- blurry vision
- feeling hungry or thirsty often
- cuts and bruises that take long to heal



Too much sugar in your blood can cause many health problems. Diabetes can lead to problems in pregnancy, blindness, heart disease, stroke, kidney failure, nerve damage, and amputations.

Who is at risk?

You are more likely to have diabetes if you have a family member with it.

You have a higher chance to have diabetes if you are overweight or do not exercise.



You cannot catch diabetes from someone.

Is there a test for diabetes?

We have a test on the bus that checks for sugar, also known as blood glucose level. We take a small drop of blood from your fingertip after pricking it. You can get results in a few minutes. Check your results with the table to the right.

Non-fasting (1-2 hours after meal)	
Normal	less than 199
Elevated	200 or greater
Fasting (8 hours without eating)	
Normal	65-99
At risk	100-125
Elevated	126 or greater

How can I prevent diabetes?



- **Eat healthy.** Your diet should have plenty of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Try to eat food low in fat and sugar.
- **Exercise most days for at least 30 minutes.** Try to keep your BMI in the healthy range on the chart we give you in clinic.

What do I do if I have high blood sugar?

There is no cure for diabetes, but you can control it.

1. A health provider can prescribe medicine to control your blood sugar. You may need to take insulin.
2. **Check your blood sugar levels often.** We can check it whenever you come to the clinic.



3. **Watch your diet.** Eat more fresh fruits and vegetables and add more whole grains to your daily diet. Cut down on sugary foods and drinks like soda. Drink more water.
4. **Exercise daily or most days.** Aim for 30 minutes a day. Try to work up a sweat and get your heart to beat faster.

More Resources

The American Heart Association (<http://www.heart.org>)

The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov>)

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (<http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes>)