



"Excellence in Home Care"

Diabetes Education

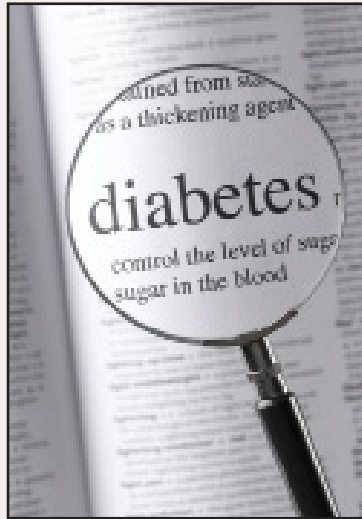
www.BethanyHealthcare.com

What is Diabetes?

Diabetes is a disorder of metabolism, the way our bodies use digested food for growth and energy. Most of the food we eat is broken down into glucose, the form of sugar in the blood. Glucose is the main source of fuel for the body.

After digestion, glucose passes into the bloodstream where it is used by cells for growth and energy. For glucose to get into cells, insulin must be present. Insulin is a hormone produced by the pancreas, a large gland located behind the liver.

When we eat, the pancreas automatically produces the right amount of insulin to move glucose from blood into our cells. In people with diabetes, however, the pancreas either produces little or no insulin, or the cells do not respond appropriately to the insulin that is produced. Glucose builds up in the blood, overflows into the urine, and passes out of the body. Thus, the body loses its main source of fuel even though the blood contains large amounts of glucose.



Type 1 Diabetes

Type 1 diabetes is an autoimmune disease. In diabetes, the immune system attacks the insulin-producing beta cells in the pancreas and destroys them. The pancreas then produces little or no insulin. A person with Type 1 diabetes must take insulin daily.

Type 1 diabetes accounts for about five to 10 percent of diagnosed diabetes in the United States. It develops most often in children and young adults, but can appear at any age.

Type 2 Diabetes

About 90 to 95 percent of people with diabetes have Type 2. This form of diabetes is associated with

older age, obesity, family history of diabetes, previous history of gestational diabetes, physical inactivity, and ethnicity. About 80 percent of people with Type 2 diabetes are overweight.

With Type 2 diabetes the pancreas does not make enough insulin and/or the body becomes insulin resistant. The body cells do not respond appropriately when insulin is present. In time, insulin production may decrease or stop all together. The result is the same as for Type 1 diabetes—glucose builds up in the blood and the body cannot make efficient use of its main source of fuel so insulin injections are required.

Gestational Diabetes

Gestational diabetes develops only during pregnancy. Like Type 2 diabetes, it occurs more often in African Americans, American Indians, Hispanic Americans, and among women with a family history of diabetes. Women who have had gestational diabetes have a 20 to 50 percent chance of developing Type 2 diabetes within five to 10 years.

Licensed Medicare and Medicaid agency by the State of Texas.

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What Are the Risk Factors?

Certain factors can increase the risk of developing diabetes, including increasing age, ethnic background, family history of diabetes, and being overweight or sedentary.

Symptoms of Diabetes

Symptoms of diabetes are varied and could be symptoms for other conditions as well. Please discuss your symptoms with your physician who may perform certain tests to determine if you have diabetes.

The fasting plasma glucose test is the preferred test for diagnosing diabetes. A diagnosis can be made, however, after positive results on a random plasma glucose value of 200 mg/dL (milligrams per deciliter) or more, along with the presence of diabetes symptoms, a plasma glucose value of 126 mg/dL or more after a person has fasted for eight hours, or an oral glucose tolerance test. The test is taken in a lab or in the doctor's office.

Managing Diabetes

Depending on the severity of your condition, you may

have to take pills to aid in your body's use of glucose. Or, you may need insulin injections. The amount of insulin you'll need will be determined in discussion with your physician. Testing your blood sugar levels with a meter will become routine as you learn what your numbers mean.

Discovering what you should and should not eat as a diabetic is also important. Reducing carbohydrates, increasing fiber, and avoiding high sodium foods is recommended. Maintaining a safe weight and exercising are also effective in managing diabetes.

It is important to control your diabetes as it can lead to complications including blindness, heart and blood vessel disease, stroke, kidney failure, amputations, and nerve damage.

SYMPTOMS

Type 1 Diabetes

- Frequent urination
- Unusual thirst
- Extreme hunger
- Unusual weight loss
- Extreme fatigue and irritability

Type 2 Diabetes*

- Any of the Type 1 symptoms
- Frequent infections
- Blurred vision
- Cuts/bruises that are slow to heal
- Tingling/numbness in hands/feet
- Recurring skin, gum, or bladder infections

*Often people with Type 2 diabetes have no symptoms



Bethany HomeHealth Can Help

The Bethany HomeHealth nurses are skilled in helping their diabetic patients manage their disease through:

- Education of diabetes
- Instruction in using testing equipment
- Monitoring blood glucose levels
- Drawing blood to help monitor blood pressure and cholesterol levels
- Help scheduling physical and eye exams
- Help keeping vaccines up to date
- Teaching proper foot care
- Promoting weight control and dietary guidelines
- Coordinating an exercise program
- Providing guidelines for taking medications

If you or a loved one has been diagnosed with diabetes, call us. We'll work with your physician to coordinate a care plan that is right for you—in your own home.

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