

# Get the Facts About Diabetes!

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER WHEN IT COMES TO BETTER HEALTH

*If you have diabetes, **you are the most important member of your health care team.** Learning about diabetes can make it easier to manage your symptoms and stay healthy.*



## What is diabetes?

- Diabetes is a disease that keeps the body from either making enough insulin or using insulin properly. Insulin helps your body turn the food you eat into energy. If your body produces little or no insulin, or does not use the insulin it makes, you may have diabetes.
- If not controlled, diabetes can cause kidney failure, heart attack, stroke, blindness, foot ulcers, and gum diseases.

## Type 1

The body makes little or no insulin. You will need shots to control this type of diabetes.

## Type 2

The body makes insulin but does not know how to use it properly.

## Gestational

Women may get diabetes while they are pregnant. This type of diabetes goes away after the baby is born.

To learn more, call the Health Education Information Line, Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at **1-800-804-6074** (TTY/TDD: 711) or visit [www.healthnet.com](http://www.healthnet.com).

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This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Always follow your health care provider's instructions. Programs and services are subject to change.

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## Do you have diabetes?

You may have diabetes if you have any of these signs:

- Being very thirsty or hungry
- Urinating a lot
- A sudden loss of weight for no reason
- Blurry vision from time to time
- Feeling tired or sleepy
- Tingling skin

## How to control diabetes

- **Eating healthily will help keep your blood sugar levels under control.** Ask your doctor for help with a meal plan that is right for you.
- **Test your blood sugar every day.** The normal blood sugar range before a meal is 70–130 mg/dl. The normal blood sugar range for 1–2 hours after a meal is 70–180 mg/dl. Ask your doctor for your recommended blood glucose range.
- **Know your A1C – blood sugar level.** An A1C test measures your blood sugar level over the past three months. It is the best way to know if your blood sugar is under control. High blood sugar increases your risk of diabetes and other serious problems, such as heart disease or stroke.

**Below 5.7: Normal**

**5.7–6.4: Pre-diabetes**

**6.5 or above: Diabetes**

- **Exercise regularly.** Being active can lower your blood sugar levels, help you lose weight and keep your heart healthy.
- **Take your medicine.** Along with a good diet, you may need to take insulin shots or pills to help control your diabetes. Always take your medicine as your doctor tells you.

## Effects of diabetes on your body

- **Dental care.** Visit your dentist every six months for a checkup and cleaning. Always tell your dentist you have diabetes to help focus attention on gum disease and other common diabetic mouth problems.
- **Foot care.** Check your feet every day. Diabetes may cause foot problems that can lead to the loss of toes, feet and legs.
- **Eye care.** Visit your eye doctor once a year. Diabetes may cause problems with your eyes and vision that can lead to blindness.



**Help prevent oral health problems from diabetes. Take care of your teeth!**

- **Brush your teeth at least two times a day.**
- **Use a soft toothbrush and fluoride toothpaste.**
- **Brush the top and side surfaces of your teeth.**
- **Get a new toothbrush every three months.**
- **Floss at least once a day to help remove plaque.**