

LEARN ABOUT DIABETES BASICS



HEALTH
Department

This fact sheet is for information only and is not meant to be used for self-diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a health care provider.

What Happens When You Have Diabetes?

- When you eat, your body turns food into sugar (called glucose), which enters your bloodstream. As blood sugar levels rise, your body releases a hormone called insulin. Insulin helps move sugar from the blood into your cells, where it is used for energy
- With diabetes, the body either doesn't make enough insulin or doesn't use it properly. As a result, too much sugar stays in the blood. Over time, high blood sugar can lead to serious health problems, such as heart disease, vision loss, and kidney disease

Can Prediabetes Be Prevented?

- Prediabetes (early signs of type 2 diabetes):
- About 1 in 3 adults in the U.S. have prediabetes, a condition where blood sugar is higher than normal but not yet diabetes, and while most people don't know they have it, making healthy choices like eating well and being active can help prevent it from turning into type 2 diabetes, though there is currently no known way to prevent type 1 diabetes

Types of Diabetes

- **Type 1 Diabetes**
 - Happens when the body's immune system attacks the cells that make insulin
 - Usually starts in childhood or young adulthood
 - Cannot be prevented
- **Type 2 Diabetes**
 - Happens when the body doesn't use insulin properly
 - Often develops in adults, but more kids and teens are getting it
 - Many people don't notice any symptoms, so regular testing is important
 - Can often be prevented or managed with healthy habits
- **Gestational Diabetes (During Pregnancy)**
 - Some women develop diabetes during pregnancy
 - Usually goes away after the baby is born
 - Increases the risk of type 2 diabetes for both mother and child later in life

There is no cure for diabetes, but it can be managed by eating healthy foods, staying active, losing extra weight if needed, taking medicine as prescribed, and going to the doctor for regular check-ups.