Understanding DIABETES

American Diabetes Association®

Diabetes is a problem with your body that causes blood glucose (blood sugar) levels to rise higher than normal. This is also called hyperglycemia. There are different types of diabetes—including type 1, type 2, and a condition called gestational diabetes, which happens during pregnancy.

SYMPTOMS

People with type 2 diabetes can have symptoms so mild that they go unnoticed.



TYPE 1

In type 1 diabetes, your immune system mistakenly destroys the cells in your pancreas that make insulin. Without insulin, your blood glucose rises to levels higher than normal. Type 1 diabetes can now be diagnosed using tests that demonstrate the immune attack even before the blood glucose rises.

TYPE 2

In type 2 diabetes, your body does not use insulin properly. This is called insulin resistance. Type 2 diabetes develops most often in middle-aged and older adults but can appear in young people. Type 2 diabetes is a progressive disease. Even if you don't need to treat your diabetes with medications at first, you may need to over time.

CAUSES

Scientist do not know what triggers type 1 diabetes or the exact cause of type 2 diabetes.

Identifying and monitoring people with type 1 diabetes before the development of symptoms decreases the rate of developing diabetic ketoacidosis, a life threatening complication, with initial symptoms.

The development of type 2 diabetes has been associated with several risk factors. These risk factors include:

- history of high blood glucose, prediabetes, and/or gestational diabetes (GDM)
- overweight/obesity
- physical inactivity
- family history/genetics
- age
- high blood pressure
- cholesterol problems

TREATMENT

The goals of diabetes treatment are to delay loss of insulin production (type 1) or reduce insulin resistance (type 2) to prevent health problems and to make sure you feel good day-to-day. The best way to reach those goals is by:

- taking medications, if your doctor prescribes them
- eating a healthy diet
- being physical active
- maintaining a healthy weight (type 2)



For more information visit **diabetes.org** or call us at **1-800-DIABETES** (800-342-2383)