



Diabetes

Healthy blood sugar = happy heart

Our bodies need some sugar in our blood, called glucose, to supply energy to our cells. High blood sugar, however, may lead to diabetes. It can also affect your heart. Elevated blood sugar may clog or harden your blood vessels, making it harder for blood to flow to and from the heart.

As part of a physical, your doctor might run tests to see where you stand. If your blood sugar is higher than normal but not yet type 2 diabetes, you may be one of the 86 million Americans with prediabetes. At this stage, you have a chance to take action to bring your blood sugar levels down, which will also lower your odds of heart attack or stroke.

Protect your heart by keeping your blood sugar under control. If you're at risk, your doctor can help develop a plan to keep your heart – and your whole body – healthy.

Source: Wellsource/Momentum Health Shelf

Get smart about blood sugar with this quiz

How much do you know about diabetes and blood sugar? Answer true or false:

1. T F You're at risk for diabetes if your blood sugar is 100 mg/dL or higher.
2. T F High blood pressure ups your risk of high blood sugar.
3. T F If your blood sugar is high, you could develop health problems that affect your eyes, kidneys, nerves and heart.
4. T F 9 out of 10 people with blood sugar levels that are higher than normal don't know it.
5. T F Being active and eating healthy foods is the best way to manage your blood sugar.
6. T F When you have type 1 diabetes, your body makes too much insulin, the hormone that helps control blood sugar.

Answers: 1. False, 125 mg/dL or higher could be diabetes. 2. True. 3. True. 4. True. 5. True. 6. False, with type 1 diabetes your body can't make insulin.

Source: Wellsource/Momentum Health Shelf

Trivia time:

How quickly does quitting smoking affect your blood sugar?

Answer: Your body will start to handle sugar better in just 10 or 12 hours!

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Diabetes

Tobacco and diabetes are a bad combo

You probably know that tobacco use is linked to cancer, but did you know that it also ups your risk for diabetes? If you already have diabetes, smoking can also make the disease harder to manage.

The more you smoke or breathe secondhand smoke, the higher your risk. But you can do something about it: Quit smoking!

Anyone can improve their health by going tobacco free, but diabetics have even more to gain:

- > your body will be able to process sugar better
- > your blood pressure will go down, lowering your risk of heart disease
- > your cholesterol will go down, reducing your risk of stroke and heart attack.
- > you'll have less risk of damage to your eyes, kidneys and nerves

If you use tobacco in any form, you'll see immediate benefits from quitting. There's no one best way to quit, so work with your doctor to make a plan that's right for you.

Source: Wellsource/Momentum Health Shelf

Trivia time:

What are the chances you'll get diabetes?

Answer: Health experts say that 1 in 3 people born today will get diabetes at some point in their life. Ten years ago only half that many people did.

Help control your blood sugar with these 10 superfoods

When you plan meals, make sure to include these 10 superfoods. They don't cause blood sugar spikes and deliver key nutrients like calcium, potassium, fiber, magnesium and vitamins A, C and E.

- > beans
- > dark green leafy vegetables
- > citrus fruit
- > sweet potatoes
- > berries
- > tomatoes
- > fish high in Omega-3s such as salmon, tuna, and sardines
- > whole grains
- > nuts
- > fat-free milk and yogurt

Sources: American Diabetes Association

Diabetes and depression may go hand in hand

Statistically, there's a strong link between low mood and diabetes. That's why it's important to focus on self-care if you have diabetes.

High blood sugar doubles your risk for depression. Your body may have trouble processing sugar when you're depressed. At the same time, it's harder to manage diabetes through diet and exercise when you feel blue.

If you want help controlling your diabetes and your mental health, just ask! Talk with your doctor or see a counselor.

Source: Wellsource/Momentum Health Shelf



Diabetes

What are the two main types of diabetes?

Diabetes makes your blood sugar (also called glucose) rise too high. The hormone insulin carries energy from food to your cells. If your body doesn't make enough insulin, or can't use it well, too much sugar stays in your blood, which can damage your organs.

The diabetes treatment you receive depends on which type you have:

With **type 1 diabetes** your body doesn't produce insulin, because your immune system harms the cells that make it. This type of diabetes usually occurs in younger people, although it can appear later in life. Only 5 percent of people with diabetes have type 1.

With **type 2 diabetes** your body doesn't use insulin properly, so your pancreas can't make enough to hold your blood sugar at normal levels. This type of diabetes typically develops when people are older, but it's being diagnosed more often in children now, too.

Sources: American Diabetes Association, National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases

Trivia time:

Of all the people with diabetes, how many aren't aware that they have it?

Answer: About one third

How to support a loved one with diabetes

Diabetes can be a difficult disease to handle alone. People cope better with the support of family and friends.

Here are some ways you can be there for someone with diabetes:

- > Learn about the disease.
- > Be sympathetic. A diabetes diagnosis can be upsetting.
- > Eat well. Share meals and eat the same nutritious food as your loved one.
- > Ask what they need: Would you like me to prepare meals or go with you to your doctor? What can I do to help?

Sources: American Academy of Family Physicians, National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases

Hyperglycemia and hypoglycemia – understanding the difference

Hyperglycemia is the term for high blood sugar. It happens when your body has too little insulin or can't use insulin properly. Two common signs are frequent urination and increased thirst.

Hypoglycemia is when your blood sugar is abnormally low. Signs can vary from person to person but might include shakiness, nausea, sweating, chills, dizziness, confusion, a rapid heartbeat and more.

Sources: American Diabetes Association, American Foundation for the Blind

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True or False? Myths about the diabetes diet

Having diabetes doesn't mean giving up all your favorite foods. See if you can answer true or false to these three statements about eating well with diabetes:

- > You can eat the same nutritious foods as your family
True — Choose healthy whole grains, legumes, fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy, lean meats, poultry and fish.
- > You have to give up carbohydrates.
False — Everyone needs some carbs. Aim to eat the same amount of carbohydrate at the same time every day to maintain your blood sugar levels.
- > You can enjoy favorite treats from time to time.
True — Manage cravings by following a healthy eating plan and including a few special-occasion foods.

Sources: Group Health Cooperative, National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases

Trivia time:

Are there are only two types of diabetes?

Answer: No. Type 1 and type 2 diabetes are the most common, but there are more, including gestational diabetes.

4 ways to lower your risk of diabetes

Many people with type 2 diabetes don't realize they have it. By being aware of your risk factors, you can improve your quality of life.

You can take steps to lower your risk in these areas:

- > Being overweight or obese: Lose just 5 percent of your body weight to cut your risk significantly.
- > Physical inactivity: Get at least 50 minutes of moderate exercise three times a week.
- > High blood pressure: Control your blood pressure to take strain off your heart.
- > Abnormal cholesterol levels: Make a nutritious eating plan and take medication if necessary.

These risk factors can't be changed:

- > Family history: You may have a blood relative with diabetes.
- > Race or ethnic background: If you identify as African-American, Asian-American, Latino/Hispanic, Native American or Pacific Islander, your risk may be higher.
- > Age: People older than 45 have a higher risk.
- > Gestational diabetes: If you developed diabetes during pregnancy your risk may be higher.

Sources: American Heart Association, National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases

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