



TYPE 2 DIABETES— A FAMILY AFFAIR

How Better Health Benefits You and Your Family

WHAT IS TYPE 2 DIABETES?

Type 2 diabetes occurs when your body has a problem using the food you eat for energy.¹ This happens when the body does not produce insulin properly.^{1,2} Insulin is made by an organ called the pancreas.^{1,2}

Here's how insulin works to change sugar into energy for your body:^{1,2}

STEP 1	After you eat, your body breaks down some of the food into glucose, a form of sugar.
STEP 2	This sugar then moves through your blood to provide energy to different parts of your body.
STEP 3	Insulin helps your body turn this sugar into energy.

When you have type 2 diabetes, your pancreas isn't producing enough insulin to meet your body's needs, or your body is having trouble using the insulin it does make.¹

This means that your body has a harder time keeping your blood sugar in a healthy balance.³ When your blood sugar is too high for too long, it can potentially hurt your body. It can also increase your risk for many serious health problems.⁴



Understanding What Can Impact Your and Your Family's Health

You can help prevent and manage potential health problems linked to type 2 diabetes.⁵⁻⁸ Possible ways to help achieve good health include⁵⁻⁸:

- staying at a healthy weight
- eating right
- staying active

Family members can also help lower their risk for type 2 diabetes.⁹

No one knows for sure why some people develop type 2 diabetes and others don't. There are many things that can affect someone's risk for type 2 diabetes and other conditions such as heart disease and stroke. Some of these risk factors, like smoking, can be changed. Others, like age and family history, can't be changed.^{9,10}

FAMILY RISK FACTORS FOR TYPE 2 DIABETES¹⁰⁻¹⁵

Risk Factors That Can't Change	Factors That Can Change
<p>Age – The risk of type 2 diabetes increases with age.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• About 1 in 4 Americans 65 and older have diabetes. <p>Race – Type 2 diabetes is more common in African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, Native Americans, and Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders.</p> <p>Family history – Someone with a mother, father, sister, or brother with diabetes has a higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes.</p>	<p>Being overweight and unhealthy eating – Learning to eat healthy can help lower the risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Even losing a little weight can help prevent or manage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• high blood pressure• unhealthy cholesterol levels• high blood sugar <p>Physical inactivity – Exercise can help relieve stress and improve blood flow. It can also help lower the risk of type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and stroke.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staying active during the day can have health benefits, even if the activities aren't hard to do.

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The risk of developing type 2 diabetes can be reduced by 58% by¹⁶:

- *Losing 7% of your body weight (or 15 pounds if you weigh 200 pounds)*
- *Exercising moderately (such as brisk walking) 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week*
- *Working with your healthcare team to find your healthy weight and to develop a weight-loss plan that's right for you*

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DIAGNOSING DIABETES AND LEARNING ABOUT PREDIABETES¹⁶

Before people develop type 2 diabetes, they often have a condition known as “prediabetes.” This means their blood sugar levels are higher than normal but not high enough for them to be diagnosed with diabetes. Prediabetes does not have any clear symptoms.

- If your healthcare team determines that your family member has prediabetes, it’s important that he or she is checked for type 2 diabetes every one or two years.

Your healthcare team may test your family member if they think he or she is at risk for developing type 2 diabetes.

A1C		Fasting Plasma Glucose (FPG)		Oral Glucose Tolerance Test (OGTT)	
The A1C test measures someone’s average blood glucose for the past 2 to 3 months.		The FPG test measures someone’s blood sugar levels when the person has not had anything to eat or drink (except water) for at least 8 hours.		The OGTT measures someone’s blood sugar levels before and two hours after drinking a special sweet drink.	
The results of these tests determine whether someone has prediabetes or type 2 diabetes:					
Result	A1C	Result	FPG	Result	OGTT
Normal	Less than 5.7%	Normal	Less than 100 mg/dL	Normal	Less than 140 mg/dL
Prediabetes	5.7% to 6.4%	Prediabetes	100 mg/dL to 125 mg/dL	Prediabetes	140 mg/dL to 199 mg/dL
Type 2 Diabetes	6.5% or higher	Type 2 Diabetes	126 mg/dL or higher	Type 2 Diabetes	200 mg/dL or higher

TYPE 2 DIABETES SUPPORT

Supporting Each Other to Stay in Good Health

It's important for you and your family members to eat right, stay active, and maintain a healthy weight.

Finding a Healthy Weight

Losing weight may mean making changes in eating habits and daily activity levels.¹² When the whole family is working towards a healthy lifestyle, you are all helping each other.

Eating Right

Eating right can be a recipe for success. A well-balanced meal plan can help you and your family eat right.^{7,8} Good nutrition is something that benefits your whole family.¹⁷ Remember to also work with your healthcare team to help you make healthy food choices.

Staying Active

Fitting a regular amount of physical activity in every day can have a big impact on your and your family's health.¹³ It doesn't have to be difficult. Walking a few nights a week has been shown to improve blood pressure, cholesterol, stress, and depression.¹⁸ Physical activity can provide many other health benefits, like relieving stress and making muscles and bones stronger.¹³ Remember to talk to your doctor before beginning any exercise program.

Supporting Each Other

Adopting a healthy lifestyle doesn't happen right away. It can take a little time for you and your family to find a healthy balance. By working together, you may help each other reach your health goals.



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