



EMPLOYEE HEALTH INITIATIVE: AMERICAN DIABETES ALERT DAY

Could You be at Risk? American Diabetes Alert Day



Could you have diabetes? **One in five Americans have a high risk of developing type 2 diabetes, or may even already have diabetes.** Because people can live for years without knowing they have diabetes, the American Diabetes Association (ADA) is issuing an urgent call-to-action for Americans to learn their risk for type 2 diabetes during the American Diabetes Alert Day. Awareness about diabetes can lead to early detection and treatment, which may help prevent type 2 diabetes or devastating complications associated with diabetes such as heart disease, stroke, blindness, kidney disease, and amputation.

The primary risk factors for type 2 diabetes include being overweight, sedentary, over the age of 45 and having a family history of diabetes. African Americans, Latinos, Native Americans, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islanders are at an increased risk, as are women who have had babies weighing more than nine pounds at birth.

While people with diabetes can exhibit noticeable symptoms, such as frequent urination, blurred vision and excessive thirst, most people diagnosed with type 2 diabetes do not show these overt warning signs as they develop the disease. Often, type 2 diabetes only becomes evident when people develop one or more of its serious complications, such as heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, eye damage, and nerve damage that can lead to amputations.



Simple lifestyle changes can make a big difference towards better health. Check Out Five Secrets to Stop Diabetes Now

Type 2 diabetes can be prevented or managed – and you don't have to run marathons or eat a vegetarian diet to do so. Simple lifestyle changes can make a big difference towards better health. But how

do you get started? And how can you stick with it? Check out these five secrets to [stop diabetes](#) from the American Diabetes Association's vast collection of expert advice. What better time to put these tips into action than during this year's American Diabetes Association Alert Day?

I. ARE YOU AN APPLE OR A PEAR?

Did you know that being an apple rather than a pear shape – more fat around your middle than around your hips – raises your risk of type 2 diabetes? To determine your shape, take a tape measure (a flexible one is best) and place it snugly (not tightly) around your waist. Compare the width of your waist to the number below. If the width of your waist is the same or bigger than the numbers below, you have too much weight around your waist and are at a greater risk for developing type 2 diabetes: Men: over 40 inches and Women: over 35 inches.

II. HAVE YOU SEEN THE SIZE OF YOUR PLATE INFLATE?

As portion sizes have grown in recent years, so has our perception of what is the appropriate amount to eat in one sitting. Even dishes and glasses have increased in size, so a normal-size portion looks inadequate, fueling the urge to fill a plate or glass with extra calories and raising your risk for type 2 diabetes. Although measuring cups and spoons may be useful at home, they aren't very realistic when you eat out. A simple trick is to use your hand to help approximate portion sizes.

- ❖ A fist = 1 cup
- ❖ Palm of a woman's hand = 3 ounces
- ❖ Palm of a man's hand = 5 ounces
- ❖ Thumb tip = 1 teaspoon
- ❖ Thumb tip = 1 teaspoon

Source: Copyright © 2009 American Diabetes Association. From *What Do I Eat Now?*



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III. HAVE YOU EVER DEVELOPED GESTATIONAL DIABETES?

During pregnancy -- usually at around 28 weeks or later -- many women are diagnosed with gestational diabetes. A diagnosis of gestational diabetes doesn't mean that you had diabetes before you conceived, or that you will have diabetes after giving birth. But it's important to follow your doctor's advice regarding blood glucose (blood sugar) levels while you're planning your pregnancy, so you and your baby both remain healthy.

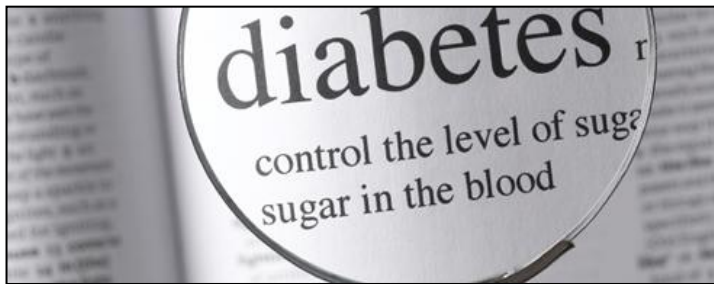


Once you've had GDM your chances are 2 in 3 that it will return in future pregnancies. And women who have had GDM are more than 7 times as likely to develop type 2 diabetes as women who didn't have diabetes in pregnancy. *How can you lower your risk?*

- ❖ Stay active. Regular exercise can help prevent type 2 diabetes. Plus it can help you lose weight, manage stress, and feel better.
- ❖ Breastfeed. If you can, breastfeed your baby. Breastfeeding can provide both short- and long-term benefits to both your baby and to you.
- ❖ Talk to your health care provider. Be sure to tell your health care providers that you've had GDM.
- ❖ Get tested. If you had GDM, you should be tested for diabetes 6–12 weeks after you give birth and at least every 3 years after that.
- ❖ Lose weight. Are you more than 20 percent over your ideal body weight? Losing even a few pounds can help you prevent type 2 diabetes.
- ❖ Limit fat to 30 percent or less of your daily calories, and watch your portion sizes. Healthy eating habits can go a long way in preventing diabetes and other health problems.

Source: American Diabetes Association's CheckUp America campaign

IV. ARE YOU A MASTER EXCUSE-MAKER? FITNESS IS KEY!



While you may try to exercise often, do you find yourself making excuses when the demands of daily life take hold? By skipping a quick walk or work-out routine, many find the pounds add up. Here are few ways to build exercise into your regular routine and lower your type 2 diabetes risk:

- ❖ When working at your desk for an extended period of time, build short breaks into your day.
- ❖ Use the stairs instead of the elevator. If need be, take the elevator part of the way and the stairs the rest of the way, then gradually increase the number of floors you climb as you become more fit.
- ❖ If safe to do so, park your car at a distant part of the office parking lot so that you can increase the amount of walking you do on your way in. If you use public transportation, get off a stop or two early and walk to your destination.

Source: Copyright © American Diabetes Association. From the "I Hate to Exercise" book

V. HAVE YOU LET UP ON YOUR CHECK-UP?

With today's hectic schedules and daily demands, it's easy to forget or forgo a scheduled visit with your health care provider. Plus, if you feel a little heavier, more stressed or have been eating less healthy, chances are you'll want to avoid this check-up more than in years past. But, seeing a healthcare provider on a regular basis is one of the best ways to manage your health, ask for tools to lower your risk, and stop diabetes before it starts.

Be sure to take the [Diabetes Risk Test](#) before visiting your health care provider. And, take along these questions and healthy guidelines to make the most of your visit.

- ❖ What is the circumference of my waist? (A healthy number is 40 inches or below for men, under 35 inches for women)
- ❖ What is my blood pressure?(Less than 120/80 is ideal)
- ❖ Will you give me a fasting blood glucose test? (Maintain a schedule of being tested every 3 years after age 45 and ask your doctor to explain the test results and provide tips on how to lower your numbers if need be)
- ❖ What is my cholesterol? (Total cholesterol should be less than 200, with LDL levels less than 100 and HDL levels more than 40 mgs for men, 50 mgs for women)
- ❖ What are some small steps I can take to be healthier and avoid type 2 diabetes?



Source: American Diabetes Association's CheckUp America campaign



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Type 1 - Discover why this form of diabetes (previously known as juvenile) is usually diagnosed in childhood.

[Type 1](#) diabetes is usually diagnosed in children and young adults, and was previously known as juvenile diabetes. In type 1 diabetes, the body does not produce insulin. Insulin is a hormone that is needed to convert sugar, starches and other food into energy needed for daily life. Only 5-10% of people with diabetes have this form of the disease. With the help of [insulin therapy](#) and other treatments, even young children with type 1 diabetes can learn to manage their condition and live long, healthy, happy lives.



Type 2 - Familiarize yourself with risks, causes, symptoms, and treatments for this increasingly common disease.

[Type 2](#) diabetes is the most common form of diabetes. Millions of Americans have been diagnosed with type 2 diabetes, and many more are unaware they are at high risk. Some groups have a higher risk for developing type 2 diabetes than others. Type 2 diabetes is more common in [African Americans](#), [Latinos](#), [Native Americans](#), and [Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders](#), as well as the aged population.

In type 2 diabetes, either the body does not produce enough insulin or the cells ignore the [insulin](#). Insulin is necessary for the body to be able to use glucose for energy. When you eat food, the body breaks down all of the sugars and starches into glucose, which is the basic fuel for the cells in the body. Insulin takes the sugar from the blood into the cells. When glucose builds up in the blood instead of going into cells, it can lead to [diabetes complications](#).

Symptoms - Concerned about your health or the health of a loved one? Learn about the symptoms of diabetes.

Diabetes often goes undiagnosed because many of its symptoms seem so harmless. Recent studies indicate that the early detection of diabetes symptoms and treatment can decrease the chance of developing the complications of diabetes.

Type 1 Diabetes

- Frequent urination
- Unusual thirst
- Extreme hunger
- Unusual weight loss
- Extreme fatigue and Irritability

Type 2 Diabetes (Often people with type 2 diabetes have no symptoms)

- Any of the type 1 symptoms
- Frequent infections
- Blurred vision
- Cuts/bruises that are slow to heal
- Tingling/numbness in the hands/feet
- Recurring skin, gum, or bladder infections

If you have one or more of these diabetes symptoms, see your doctor right away. You can also take the [Online Diabetes Risk Test](#) to find out if you are at risk for diabetes.

Prevention -Reduce your risk of developing type 2 diabetes through lifestyle changes.

You can prevent or delay the onset of type 2 diabetes through a healthy lifestyle. Change your diet, increase your level of physical activity, maintain a healthy weight...with these positive steps, you can stay healthier longer and reduce your risk of diabetes.

Are you at risk for diabetes? [Take the Risk Test](#)



Complications - Diabetes increases your risk for many serious health problems.



The good news?

With the correct treatment and recommended lifestyle changes, many people with diabetes are able to prevent or delay the onset of complications. In addition, complications from diabetes affect different segments of the population disproportionately.

Click on the links below for more information by sex, race, age, etc.:

- [Men](#)
- [Women](#)
- [Pregnant Women](#)
- [Seniors](#)
- [African Americans](#)
- [Latinos](#)
- [Native Americans](#)
- [Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians & Other Pacific Islanders](#)
- [Frequent Travelers](#)



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Common Terms - Become familiar with terms commonly used when discussing diabetes.

Click on the letter for a list of diabetes-related terms and their definitions. Adapted from NIDDK. [A-E](#) | [F-K](#) | [L-R](#) | [S-Z](#)

Tips - Find answers to all your questions about living with diabetes.

Search for a particular tip by category

Tip Category

Blood Glucose Control

Submit

MyFoodAdvisor - Food and Fitness

MyFoodAdvisor™ is a unique calorie and carbohydrate counting tool that can help with diabetes management and nutrition. Tracking what you eat can help manage your diabetes and in turn prevent the onset of complications. Learn about different types of food and make meal planning fun and easy with [MyFoodAdvisor](#). **Note:** MyFoodAdvisor opens in a new window. Please unblock any pop-up blockers.



Features:

- ❖ Explore 5000 different foods
- ❖ Search database by setting your own criteria for carbohydrates and 4 other nutrients
- ❖ Search for healthier alternatives
- ❖ Easily add up the carb, fat and 20 other nutrients you eat in a day
- ❖ Browse recipes or search by criteria that you select
- ❖ Save meals & recipes to your personal recipe box

Recipes

Eating well-balanced meals is an essential part of taking better care of yourself. Why not make it fun? Every day we feature a different delicious recipe for you to try. All [recipes](#) meet the ADA Guidelines and can help you fit nutrition into your busiest days.

Visit [stopdiabetes.com](#) where you can join the movement to Stop Diabetes, take the Diabetes Risk test, learn secrets to stop diabetes, and easily share these tools and resources with your loved ones.

The information contained in this article is from: The American Diabetes Association. They are leading the fight to stop diabetes and its deadly consequences and are fighting for those affected by diabetes. For more information please call the American Diabetes Association at 1-800-DIABETES (1-800-342-2383) or visit [www.diabetes.org](#).

Information from this source is available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).