

EXERCISE AND DIABETES

Along with diet and treatment, exercise plays an essential role in diabetes management. This is true for all types of diabetes. Staying active helps your cells react to insulin more effectively and lower your blood sugar levels. Exercising regularly can also help you:

- Reach and maintain a healthy weight
- Reduce your risk of diabetes-related health complications
- Boost mood
- Get better sleep
- Improve memory

If you have type 1 or type 2 diabetes, general guidance is to aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise each week. There are currently no separate exercise guidelines for people who have gestational diabetes. But if you're pregnant, start out slowly and gradually increase your activity level over time to avoid overdoing it. Diabetes-friendly exercises include:

- Walking
- Swimming
- Dancing
- Cycling

Talk with your doctor about safe ways to incorporate activity into your diabetes management plan. You may need to follow special precautions, like checking your blood sugar before and after working out and making sure to stay hydrated.

Consider working with a personal trainer or exercise physiologist who has experience working with people who have diabetes. They can help you develop a personalized workout plan tailored to your needs.

DIABETES DIAGNOSIS

Anyone who has symptoms of diabetes or is at risk for the condition should be tested. People are routinely tested for gestational diabetes during their second trimester or third trimester of pregnancy. Doctors use these blood tests to diagnose prediabetes and diabetes:

- The fasting plasma glucose (FPG) test measures your blood sugar after you've fasted for 8 hours.
- The A1C test provides a snapshot of your blood sugar levels over the previous 3 months.
- A 75-gram oral glucose tolerance test is also used. This checks the BG 2 hours after ingesting a sugary drink containing 75 grams of carbs.

DIABETES PREVENTION

Type 1 and type 1.5 diabetes are not preventable because they are caused by an issue with the immune system. Some causes of type 2 diabetes, such as your genes or age, aren't under your control either. Yet many other diabetes risk factors are manageable. Most diabetes prevention strategies involve making simple adjustments to your diet and fitness routine. If you've received a diagnosis of prediabetes, here are a few things you can do to delay or prevent type 2 diabetes:

- Get at least 150 minutes per week of aerobic exercises like walking or cycling.
- Cut saturated and trans fats, along with refined carbohydrates, out of your diet.
- Eat more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.
- Eat smaller portions.
- Try to lose 5% to 7% of your body weight if you are classed as overweight or obese.

These aren't the only ways to prevent diabetes.



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01865 770 380



manager@minihealthhub.co.uk



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PREHABILITATION HEALTH CONDITIONS DIABETES

Diabetes mellitus is a metabolic disease that causes high blood sugar. Your body either doesn't make enough insulin or can't effectively use the insulin it makes.

The hormone insulin moves sugar from the blood into your cells to be stored or used for energy. If this malfunctions, you may have diabetes.

Untreated high blood sugar from diabetes can damage your nerves, eyes, kidneys, and other organs. But educating yourself about diabetes and taking steps to prevent or manage it can help you protect your health.

PREDIABETES

Prediabetes is the term that's used when your blood sugar is higher than expected, but it's not high enough for a diagnosis of type 2 diabetes. It occurs when the cells in your body don't respond to insulin the way they should. This can lead to type 2 diabetes down the road.

TYPES OF DIABETES

There are a few different types of diabetes:

- **Type 1:** Type 1 diabetes is an autoimmune disease. The immune system attacks and destroys cells in the pancreas, where insulin is made. It's unclear what causes this attack.
- **Type 2:** Type 2 diabetes occurs when your body becomes resistant to insulin, and sugar builds up in your blood. It's the most common type—about 90% to 95% of people living with diabetes have type 2.
- **Type 1.5:** Type 1.5 diabetes is also known as latent autoimmune diabetes in adults (LADA). It occurs during adulthood and sets in gradually like type 2 diabetes. LADA is an autoimmune disease that cannot be treated by diet or lifestyle.
- **Gestational:** Gestational diabetes is high blood sugar during pregnancy. Insulin-blocking hormones produced by the placenta cause this type of diabetes.

A rare condition called diabetes insipidus is not related to diabetes mellitus, although it has a similar name. It's a different condition in which your kidneys remove too much fluid from your body. Each type of diabetes has unique symptoms, causes, and treatments.



CAUSES OF DIABETES

Different causes are associated with each type of diabetes.

Type 1 diabetes - Doctors don't know exactly what causes type 1 diabetes. For some reason, the immune system mistakenly attacks and destroys insulin-producing beta cells in the pancreas. Genes may play a role in some people. It's also possible that a virus sets off an immune system attack.

Type 2 diabetes - Type 2 diabetes stems from a combination of genetics and lifestyle factors. Having overweight or obesity increases your risk, too. Carrying extra weight, especially in your belly, makes your cells more resistant to the effects of insulin on your blood sugar.

Type 1.5 diabetes - Type 1.5 is an autoimmune condition that occurs when the pancreas is attacked by your own antibodies. As in type 1, it may be genetic, but more research is needed.

Gestational diabetes - Gestational diabetes occurs as the result of hormonal changes during pregnancy. The placenta produces hormones that make a pregnant person's cells less sensitive to the effects of insulin. People who are overweight when they get pregnant or who gain too much weight during pregnancy are more likely to get gestational diabetes.

SYMPTOMS OF DIABETES

The symptoms of type 1, type 2, and type 1.5 (LADA) are the same, but they occur in a shorter period than types 2 and 1.5. In type 2, the onset tends to be slower. Tingling nerves and slow-healing sores are more common in type 2. The general symptoms of diabetes include:

- increased hunger / increased thirst / Weight loss / Frequent urination / Blurry vision / Extreme fatigue / Sores that don't heal

Symptoms in men - In addition to the general symptoms of diabetes, men with diabetes may have:

- A decreased sex drive
- Erectile dysfunction
- Poor muscle strength

Symptoms in women - Women with diabetes can have symptoms such as:

- Vaginal dryness
- Urinary tract infections
- Yeast infections
- Dry, itchy skin

Gestational diabetes - Most people who develop gestational diabetes don't have any symptoms. Healthcare professionals often detect the condition during a routine blood sugar test or oral glucose tolerance test, which is usually performed between the 24th and 28th weeks of pregnancy. In rare cases, a person with gestational diabetes will also experience increased thirst or urination.

Doctors treat diabetes with a few different medications. Some are taken by mouth, while others are available as injections.

NUTRITION AND DIABETES

Healthy eating is a central part of managing diabetes. In some cases, changing your diet may be enough to manage the disease.

Types 1 and 1.5 diabetes - Your blood sugar level rises or falls based on the types of foods you eat. Starchy or sugary foods make blood sugar levels rise rapidly. Protein and fat cause more gradual increases. Your medical team may recommend that you limit the amount of carbohydrates you eat each day. You'll also need to balance your carb intake with your insulin doses. Counting carbs helps to balance the carb intake with the insulin doses.

Type 2 diabetes - Eating the right types of foods can both manage your blood sugar and help you lose any excess weight. Carb counting is an important part of eating for type 2 diabetes. A dietitian can help you figure out how many grams of carbohydrates to eat at each meal. In order to keep your blood sugar levels steady, try to eat small meals throughout the day. Emphasize healthy foods such as:

- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Whole grains
- Lean protein such as poultry and fish
- Healthy fats such as olive oil and nuts

Certain other foods can hurt efforts to manage your blood sugar.

Gestational diabetes - Eating a well-balanced diet is important for both you and your baby during these 9 months. Making the right food choices can also help you avoid diabetes medications. Watch your portion sizes, and limit sugary or salty foods. Although you need some sugar to feed your growing baby, you should avoid eating too much. Check out other do's and don'ts for healthy eating with gestational diabetes.