



Neighborhood Health Partners

Living with Diabetes

What is Diabetes?

When you have diabetes, your body has trouble using sugar (glucose) in the blood. This leads to too much sugar in your blood.

Types of Diabetes

Type 1: The body does not make enough insulin. Insulin is a hormone that helps the cells in your body to use the sugar in your blood. Many people with type 1 diabetes need an insulin shot every day.

Type 2: The body makes insulin, but the insulin does not work the way it should.

Gestational Diabetes: High blood sugar in a pregnant woman who has never had diabetes.

Diabetes Warning Signs

- Needing to use the bathroom (pass urine) more often
- Feeling very hungry and thirsty
- Feeling very tired
- Blurry vision
- Cuts and bruises take longer to heal

Tests for Diabetes

There are two tests used to find out if a person has diabetes. One is a blood test called HgA1c. A lab test called a fasting blood glucose test also is used.

Other Health Risks

Having diabetes means you are more likely to have other health problems such as ...

- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Kidney failure
- Blindness
- Foot disease
- Other infections

Tips to Help You Control Diabetes

- Check your blood sugar at home
- Know the signs of high or low blood sugar
- Take your medicines in the right amounts
- Know foods that raise blood sugar and don't eat them
- Eat small, healthy meals
- Be active for at least 15-20 minutes every day
- Try lifting weights to get stronger
- Wear a medical alert bracelet in case of an emergency
- Sign up for a diabetes self-management program
- Don't smoke or use tobacco
- Make sure you're current on vaccines

If you often have high or low blood sugar, feel you may faint, or are too sick to check your own blood sugar, call your doctor or 911 right away!

Reference Guideline: American Diabetes Association: Standards of Medical Care in Diabetes - 2015. 2015 January. Available at: http://care.diabetesjournals.org/content/suppl/2014/12/23/38.Supplement_1.DC1/January_Supplement_Combined_Final.6-99.pdf