

DIABETES

# Take Action When Diagnosed With Prediabetes or Type 2 Diabetes



## Take charge of your health

If you're reading this, it means that you're ready to take control of your health. That's smart, because Type 2 diabetes does not stand still.

If your health care provider has told you that you have prediabetes, you can be proactive to help reduce your risk of developing diabetes later. If you have been diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes, the more you know about diabetes, the better you and your health care team can help to slow its progression.

You can help reduce complications and live well by staying informed, making some lifestyle changes, following your medication plan, and seeing your health care provider regularly.

## You are not alone. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in 2019:<sup>1</sup>

**96 million** U.S. adults  
had prediabetes.  
That's more than  
**1** out of every **3** U.S. adults.

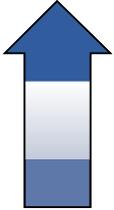
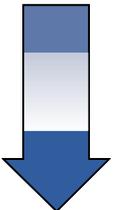
**37.3 million** Americans  
had diabetes.  
That's more than  
**1** out of every **10** Americans.

## Keep your glucose in balance

Having diabetes means that there is too much sugar (glucose) in your blood. Glucose is the most important fuel for your body, but too much of it can damage cells. By balancing your sugar levels, your body will get the fuel it needs without damaging your cells. Elevated glucose levels can lead to blood vessel damage.<sup>4</sup>

Fortunately, your health care team can discuss what your target glucose levels should be and how to keep them under control. This way, you can help reduce risks of complications from Type 2 diabetes and live a healthier life.

## The blood sugar balancing act

High Blood Sugar HYPERGLYCEMIA Symptoms: <sup>2</sup>			
	 <b>INCREASED THIRST</b>	 <b>NEED TO URINATE OFTEN</b>	 <b>HEADACHE</b>
	 <b>INCREASED APPETITE</b>	 <b>BLURRY VISION</b>	 <b>FATIGUE</b>
Low Blood Sugar HYPOGLYCEMIA Symptoms: <sup>3</sup>			
	 <b>SHAKY</b>	 <b>FAST HEARTBEAT</b>	 <b>SWEATING</b>
	 <b>DIZZY</b>	 <b>ANXIOUS</b>	 <b>INCREASED APPETITE</b>
	 <b>BLURRY VISION</b>	 <b>DROWSY</b>	 <b>HEADACHE</b>

## Change what you can and set reasonable goals

Some lifestyle changes can help make a big difference in managing diabetes. Although you cannot do anything about your family's medical history, you can do something about your own risk factors. For example, if you're a smoker, you should stop smoking. If you're overweight, do what you can to eat healthier and increase your activity level. By making changes, you can help decrease the risks that come with Type 2 diabetes.

## Watch your weight

When you make changes to your diet, you are taking very good steps to help slow diabetes from progressing. There is no one-size-fits-all nutrition plan for people with Type 2 diabetes, so it's a good idea to speak with a registered dietitian or a diabetes educator to help you create a diet that's right for you.<sup>5</sup>

## Take these simple steps

Two simple measurements can give you good estimates of any excess body weight that you may have:

### 1. Measure your waist

Use a tape measure around your bare abdomen just above your hip bone (relax and breathe out when you do this). Talk with your health care provider if your waist measures more than 40 inches (men) or 35 inches (women).<sup>6</sup>

### 2. Body Mass Index (BMI)

BMI relates how tall you are to how much you weigh, and is generally a good measure of body fat. If you would like to know your BMI, ask your health care provider.

## Get off that couch

New technology has made our lives easier and less active. By following some of the simple suggestions below, you can increase your physical activity and improve your long-term health:

Check with your health care provider before starting any exercise program.

### 1. Slow down.

Beginners often exercise too hard at first and quit after a few workouts. Build up your endurance by starting slowly. At first, you might feel tired after physical activity, but if you stick with it, you'll feel refreshed and energized.

### 2. Select activities that you enjoy and that fit into your daily schedule.

- Use the stairs instead of elevators or escalators.
- Park farther away from your destination.
- Take the dog for a walk.
- Try exercising during different times of day to see what works best for you. There is no right or wrong time of day for a workout. Try being active in the evening, if mornings are difficult for you.
- Find a partner—exercising with someone else increases the chance that you'll stick with it.

### 3. Make a plan and chart your progress.

Set realistic goals for yourself and write them down.

### 4. Reward yourself.

Keep a diary of your exercise routine and choose a non-food reward for yourself when you meet specific goals, such as pedaling that extra mile or walking for an hour. Go see a movie or buy yourself something. You've earned it!

Type 2 diabetes can affect many major organs in your body, and increase your risk of having a heart attack or stroke. Adults with diabetes are twice as likely to have heart failure hospitalizations than are adults without diabetes. When patients have both high blood pressure and diabetes—a common combination—their risk for heart disease increases.<sup>5</sup>

Through home monitoring and regular visits with your health care provider, you can keep track of your blood sugar, blood pressure, blood cholesterol, and weight. These critical health measures help your health care provider understand how well your treatment plan is managing your diabetes and high cholesterol.

## Pay attention to your blood pressure



Many adults with Type 2 diabetes have high blood pressure (hypertension), which can lead to or worsen kidney disease and heart disease. It's best to keep your blood pressure as close to normal as possible. The American Diabetes Association (ADA) recommends <math>< 140/90</math> mmHg for most patients.<sup>5</sup> Your provider can tell you what your blood pressure goal should be.

## Quit smoking

The chemicals in cigarette smoke have an effect on blood glucose levels. Smoking increases the risk of diabetes complications, including heart disease and even premature death.<sup>5</sup> Quitting is the best thing you can do for your health. If you smoke, speak with your health care team about an effective plan for quitting.





## Know your medications

If you have Type 2 diabetes, lifestyle changes can help in managing your condition, but over time, these changes may not be enough. Your health care provider may decide that medications should be part of your overall treatment plan.

There are several medications that are used to treat Type 2 diabetes. Medications work in different ways. Ask your health care provider about which medications are best for you.

Remember to tell your health care provider about all medicines and supplements that you are taking.

## Understand the role that insulin plays

Whatever your treatment goal is, the way you achieve it may need to change over time. By the time most people are diagnosed with diabetes, their body may already be having difficulty producing insulin or using the insulin that it makes. The natural progression of Type 2 diabetes means that treatment evolves as well.

With Type 2 diabetes, you may have been prescribed various treatments to control your blood sugar levels. If you have been on one or more oral medications, your provider may also prescribe insulin to control your diabetes. Changing treatments doesn't mean that you've done something wrong or that your diabetes has gotten worse.



## Tips for staying on track

One of the best ways to manage your Type 2 diabetes is to stay in contact with your health care team. Making small changes to your lifestyle and sticking to them can also help.

- Keep a blood sugar diary. Each time you check your blood sugar level, make a record in this diary. Take this diary with you when you visit your health care team. This information will help you take control of your diabetes.
- Discuss ideas for starting an exercise plan with your health care team. If your team approves, exercise for 150 minutes per week.<sup>5</sup>
- Be mindful of what you're eating and control your portions. Plan well-balanced, nutritious meals. A meal diary can give your health care team a better idea of how you are managing your diabetes and what adjustments you may need to make.
- Take your medications as prescribed and store them properly.
- Have regular checkups.

## How to cope after diagnosis<sup>7</sup>

<b>Do</b> seek support	<b>Don't</b> go it alone
Your health care team, family, friends, and others with Type 2 diabetes can provide support, reassurance, or perspective when things get tough.	Isolation can make it even worse.
<b>Do</b> get moving	<b>Don't</b> neglect your mind
Physical activity can help lift your mood when you feel sad or worried.	Make time for activities, such as meditation, that you find comforting.
<b>Do</b> think positive	<b>Don't</b> set unreasonable expectations
Give yourself a pat on the back once in a while! Acknowledge and celebrate your successes, especially the small victories.	Your self-care goals should be right for your needs and your lifestyle. Work with your health care team to set realistic goals.
<b>Do</b> enjoy yourself	<b>Don't</b> beat yourself up
Make time for the hobbies, activities, and people that you enjoy.	When you miss a goal, don't blame yourself.
<b>Do</b> learn from what works	<b>Don't</b> give up
Everyone is different. What motivates and inspires one person may be annoying to someone else. When you find a self-care technique that works for you, stick with it.	Self-care is a process. There will be easy days and difficult days. With time and support from your team, you can live well with Type 2 diabetes.

This health information is being provided for general educational purposes only. Your health care provider is the single best source of information regarding your health. Please consult your health care provider if you have any questions about your health or treatment.

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