

DIABETES

Diabetes is a condition in which a person's body fails to produce or use insulin efficiently. Without insulin, the body's cells are unable to process glucose (sugar) properly, which in turn, causes excess sugar to accumulate in the blood stream. When left untreated, the accumulation of glucose can cause serious damage to blood vessels and organs such as the kidneys, heart, and eyes.

DEFINITIONS

Insulin – A hormone produced in the pancreas that “unlocks” the body's cells, allowing them to process glucose efficiently.

Type 1 Diabetes – Occurs when the pancreas no longer produces insulin. It is usually diagnosed during adolescents. Type 1 Diabetics **MUST** take insulin injections.

Type 2 Diabetes – Occurs when the cells of the body no longer respond to insulin being produced and/or the pancreas no longer produces enough insulin. Type 2 Diabetes can be managed through changes in weight and diet/exercise or with medication.

KNOW YOUR NUMBERS

Fasting Blood Glucose Levels (8 hours)

NORMAL <100

PRE-DIABETES 100-125

DIABETES ≥126

REDUCING YOUR RISK FOR TYPE 2 DIABETES

Lose Weight/Maintain a Healthy Weight

- As fat cells decrease in size, they become better able to use insulin. When a person loses weight, their fat cells shrink, allowing them to process glucose (sugar) more effectively.

Engage in Regular Physical Activity

- Glucose (sugar) is our primary source of energy. During physical activity, our body “burns” off excess glucose in the form of energy. Regular physical activity will also help with weight management.

Limit Consumption of Refined Carbohydrates/Sugar

- Although a person cannot actually get diabetes by eating too much sugar, a diet packed with refined carbohydrates and sugar can lead to weight gain. However, someone who has been diagnosed with diabetes needs to be concerned about their intake of sugar and certain carbohydrates.

Get Regular Screenings

- Knowing your numbers will enable you to monitor your risk and make changes if necessary.