

## What is Diabetes?

Insulin is a hormone that helps your body absorb and use glucose (sugar). Glucose is the main source of fuel for the body. After digestion, glucose passes into the bloodstream where it's used by tissues and cells for growth and energy. Without insulin, glucose builds up in the blood and can't get to the organs. When you have Diabetes, your body either doesn't produce insulin (type 1) or doesn't properly use the insulin the body produces (type 2).

## Types of Diabetes

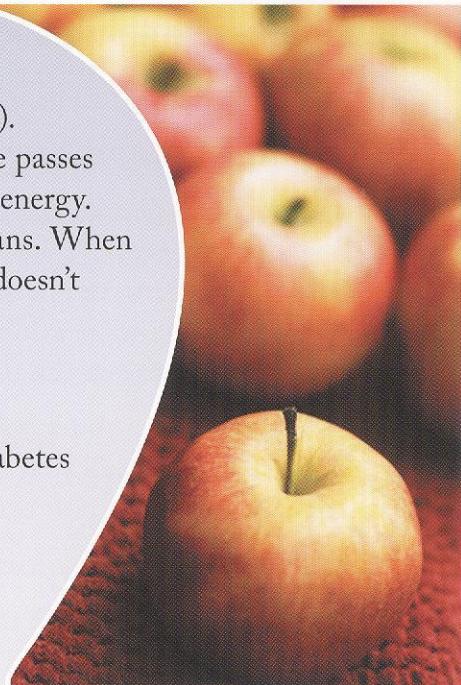
Type 1 - The body does not produce any insulin. People with type 1 diabetes must take insulin every day to stay alive.

Type 2 - The body does not make enough, or use insulin well. Most people with diabetes have type 2.

## Watch What You Eat and Get Exercise

- There is no one diet for people with diabetes. Work with your physician or nurse to come up with a plan for you.
- You can eat the foods you love by watching serving sizes. Carbohydrates raise your blood sugar the most.
- The "Nutrition Facts" label on foods can help. Remember that many packaged foods contain more than 1 serving.
- The foods we eat are made up of:
  - Carbohydrates (fruits, vegetables, breads, juices, milk, cereals and desserts)
  - Fats
  - Protein
  - Cholesterol
  - Fiber (fruits, vegetables, beans, breads, and cereals)
- Be active at least 30 minutes a day most days of the week.
- Exercise helps your body's insulin work better. It also lowers your blood sugar, blood pressure and cholesterol.

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### ARE YOU AT RISK FOR DIABETES?

- Are you overweight?
- Do you get little or no exercise?
- Do you have high blood pressure (130/80 or higher)?
- Do you have a brother or sister with diabetes?
- Do you have a parent with diabetes?
- Are you a woman who had diabetes when you were pregnant OR have you had a baby who weighed more than 9 pounds at birth?
- Are you African American, Native American, Hispanic, or Asian American/Pacific Islander?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, ask your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist if you need a diabetes test.

## Use Medicines Wisely

Sometimes people with diabetes need to take pills or an injection (insulin). If so, be sure to follow the directions given by your physician.

Ask your doctor, nurse or pharmacist what your medicines do, when to take them, and if they have any side effects.



## Check Your Blood Sugar and Know Your ABCs

Help prevent heart disease and stroke by controlling your blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol. Make a plan with your doctor, nurse or pharmacist. Check your blood sugar using a meter (home testing kit). This tells what your blood sugar is so you can make wise choices.

Ask your doctor for an A-1-C (A-onesee) blood test. It measures how well your blood glucose has been controlled over the past three months.

Talk to your health professionals about your ABC's:

- A1C (A-onesee) ADA target: less than 7
- Blood pressure – high blood pressure makes your heart work harder than it should. ADA target: less than 130/80
- Cholesterol – too much bad cholesterol (LDL) can build up in your blood vessels and cause a heart attack or stroke. ADA target: less than 100

This document was developed by FDA's Office of Women's Health (OWH), the National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS), and the American Diabetes Association (ADA). The OWH, NACDS, and the ADA thank all of the participating organizations that have assisted in its reproduction and distribution.

## Take Time To Care... About Diabetes

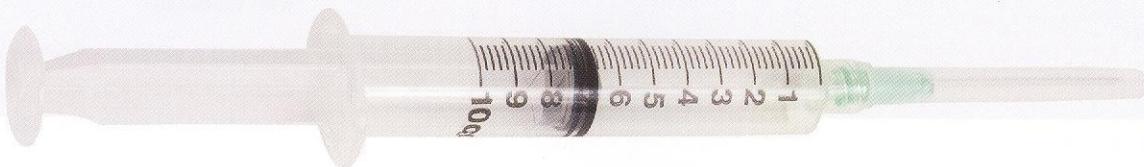
For more information:

1-800-DIABETES  
(1-800-342-2383)

[www.fda.gov/womens](http://www.fda.gov/womens)

[www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org)

[www.nacds.org](http://www.nacds.org)



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