

# WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT TYPE 2 DIABETES

In the Clinic  
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## What Is Type 2 Diabetes?

Diabetes is a condition where there is too much sugar (glucose) in your blood. Sugar can build up because your body doesn't make enough of a hormone called "insulin". Diabetes can happen if you don't have enough insulin to turn the sugar into energy. It also may happen if your body doesn't respond to the insulin it does have.

Most people with diabetes make at least some insulin, but it doesn't work to keep the blood sugar under control. This is called type 2 diabetes. When type 2 diabetes is not controlled, it can cause sugar to build up. If the sugar stays high, it can slowly damage the heart, kidneys, nerves, eyes, and feet. It is very important to keep type 2 diabetes under control to prevent complications.

Complications from uncontrolled diabetes can include:

- Vision loss
- Kidney damage
- Nerve damage
- Foot ulcers
- Heart disease
- Possible amputation from infections

## What Are the Warning Signs?

- Extreme thirst and/or hunger
- Fatigue
- Frequent need to urinate
- Unusual weight loss
- Blurred vision
- Tingling or numbness in hands or feet
- Frequent infections
- Bruises that are slow to heal

## How Is It Diagnosed?

Diabetes is diagnosed by testing the level of glucose, or sugar, in your blood. Two or more tests might be used to diagnose diabetes. You may need to fast before some diabetes tests. This means you will not have any food or drink (except water) for several hours before your blood is tested. Other tests might require you to drink a special drink before your blood is tested. Talk to your doctor about how you should prepare for your diabetes test.

## How Is It Treated?

People with diabetes need to improve sugar (glucose) control in their bodies.

- Sometimes, lifestyle changes such as eating healthy, losing weight, or exercising regularly can help improve glucose control.
- If lifestyle changes don't improve glucose control, your doctor may prescribe medicines.



- There are many different types of medicine for type 2 diabetes, including insulin. Not all people with type 2 diabetes will need insulin. Talk to your doctor about what treatment plan is best for you.

## What Can I Expect From Doctor Visits?

- Your doctor will talk to you about your blood sugar levels and the results of any blood tests.
- Your doctor will also ask about your diet and exercise.
- Diabetes can cause nerve damage, which may feel like tingling or burning pain. Your doctor will check your feet for injuries and loss of feeling during visits.
- Your doctor will also check your blood pressure, cholesterol levels, and kidney function.
- You will also need an eye examination to check for any problems.

## Questions for My Doctor

- Will I have to use insulin?
- Do I have to check my blood sugar?
- How can I check my feet at home?
- Will I need to lose weight? If so, what is the best way to do this?
- How often should I make follow up visits?
- Are there any other tests I need?
- Do I need any shots (vaccines)?

## For More Information



### ACP:

[https://www.acponline.org/cgi-bin/cppp.cgi?CPP3003\\_Living\\_With\\_Diabetes\\_2014.pdf](https://www.acponline.org/cgi-bin/cppp.cgi?CPP3003_Living_With_Diabetes_2014.pdf)  
[www.acponline.org/patients\\_families/products/health\\_tips/diab\\_en.pdf](http://www.acponline.org/patients_families/products/health_tips/diab_en.pdf)

### American Diabetes Association:

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