

**THE
TRUTH
ABOUT**

DIABETES



DIABETES – CAUSES AND TYPES

Diabetes mellitus also known sugar diabetes is a condition which takes place when the body is not able to use glucose normally. The major source of energy for the body's cells is glucose. The amount of glucose which is in the blood is normally controlled by insulin which is a hormone that is made by the pancreas. Insulin usually assists glucose to enter the cells.

When we talk about diabetes, it means the pancreas was not able to make enough insulin (type 1 diabetes) or the body has not been able to respond well to the insulin which was made (type 2 diabetes). This process usually cause the level of glucose in the blood to go up, thereby leading to symptoms like extreme thirst, frequent urination, and unexplained weight loss.

Causes of Diabetes

Diabetes is usually caused by too little insulin which is a hormone that is produced by the pancreas to control blood sugar, resistance to insulin, or both.

To know diabetes better, it is very necessary to understand the right process of food metabolism. A lot of things take place when food is digested:

- A sugar which is called glucose goes into the bloodstream and glucose is a source of fuel for the body.
- Pancreas is an organ which makes insulin and the role of insulin is to take glucose from the bloodstream into living cells, fat and muscle where it is normally used as fuel.
- People who have diabetes usually have lots of sugar in their blood and this happens because their pancreas didn't produce much insulin or their living cells, fat and muscle has not responded to insulin the right way, or both.

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Types of Diabetes

- **Type 1 diabetes which was known previously as insulin-dependent diabetes**
Type 1 diabetes is an auto-immune disease in which the immune system of the body kills the insulin which produces beta cells in the pancreas. This type of diabetes which is also known as juvenile-onset diabetes is in 10-15% of all the people who lives with the disease. It usually appears at any age, mostly under the age of 40, and is always triggered by some environmental factors like diet, viruses or chemicals in people genetically predisposed. People that have type 1 diabetes need to inject themselves with insulin so many times a day and follow a good exercise and careful diet plan.

Type 1 diabetes is usually diagnosed in childhood. The body makes little or no insulin, and daily injections of insulin are needed to sustain life.

- **Type 2 diabetes which was known previously as non-insulin dependent diabetes**

The most common form of diabetes is the type 2 diabetes; it normally affects 85-90% of all the people who has the disease. It is a type of diabetes that is also known as late-onset diabetes, it is characterized by relative insulin deficiency and insulin resistance. It is a disease which is very genetic in origin but some lifestyle factors like high blood pressure, inactivity, poor diet and lots of weight is the main risk factors for its development. In most cases symptoms do not appear for so many years and, by the time it does appear, it may have developed some issues. People who have type 2 diabetes are most likely to suffer from cardiovascular disease. Type 2 diabetes is normally treated by exercise, tablets or changes of dietary. Sometimes insulin injections may be needed later.

Type 2 diabetes is far more common than type 1 and makes up most of all cases of diabetes because it usually occurs in adulthood. The pancreas will refuse to produce enough insulin that normally keeps blood glucose levels normal, because the body does not respond very well to the insulin. There are a lot of people who has type 2 diabetes but do not know they have it, and it is a very serious condition. Because of the growing number of older Americans, increase in obesity, and failure to exercise, type 2 diabetes is becoming very common.

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- **Gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM)**

GDM also known as carbohydrate intolerance, is normally diagnosed at the time of pregnancy through an oral glucose tolerance test. In Australia, between 5.5 and 8.8% of women who are pregnant normally develop GDM and the risk factors for GDM usually include obesity, a family history of diabetes, increasing maternal age and being a member of a community or an ethnic group which has a very high risk of having type 2 diabetes. While the carbohydrate intolerance normally comes back to the right level after birth, the mother has a very high risk of developing full diabetes and the baby has a high risk of developing obesity, impaired glucose tolerance or diabetes later in life. Dietary changes and self care are very important in treatment.

Gestational diabetes is high blood glucose which normally develops during pregnancy in a woman who does not have diabetes.

More than 20 million Americans are affected by Diabetes and about 54 million Americans have prediabetes. There are a lot of risk factors for diabetes, which includes

- Not getting enough exercise
- High blood pressure
- Obesity
- High blood cholesterol level
- Age greater than 45 years
- A parent, brother, or sister with diabetes
- Some ethnic groups (particularly African Americans, Native Americans, Asians, Pacific Islanders, and Hispanic Americans)
- High blood levels of triglycerides (a type of fat molecule)
- Giving birth to a baby weighing more than 9 pounds or gestational diabetes

The American Diabetes Association usually recommends that everybody who is above the age of 45 be screened at least every 3 years for diabetes and anybody at very high risk should be screened more often.

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Facts about Diabetes

The fact is before anyone get type 2 diabetes, they have always be with "pre-diabetes" -- which is blood glucose levels that is a lot higher than normal but still not high enough yet to be diagnosed as diabetes. There are so many people all over the world who are with pre-diabetes. Recent study has shown that there are a lot of long-term damages which occur to the body, most especially the circulatory system and heart, is already happening during pre-diabetes.

The real cause of diabetes has continued to be a mystery, although both environmental and genetics factors like obesity and lack of exercise has be seen to play some roles.

Diabetes symptoms usually goes from person to person but most of the time anybody who has diabetes will have some or all of these symptoms such as blurred vision, always going to the restroom, stomach pain, staying thirsty, fatigue, and sometimes people suffer from weight loss.

Type 1 diabetes is usually only found in children and type 2 diabetes is mostly found in grown up although there are some times where children are normally diagnosed with type 2 diabetes and some people may even be diagnosed with being borderline diabetic, which sometimes ends up turning into full blown diabetes.

A healthy, nutritional diet and a regular exercise program can assist in treating the disease; this is some of the most necessary things which people with diabetes should know. Always speak with your doctor about the type of diet that you have to consider following, along with the right exercise program. The nutritionist or a doctor will be able to tell you the right kinds of foods which you have to be avoiding and then give you some tips on the type of exercise which you need every week. Doing this will make you feel so much better about yourself and it also has a lot of health benefits.

Now you have to know the truth about some of the most popular myths about diabetes.

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- You can get diabetes from another person. This is actually false, although the exact reason why some people develop diabetes is not known but what is known is that diabetes is not contagious. It is never caught just like a flu or cold. But there is some genetic link when we talk about diabetes, mostly type 2 diabetes. Lifestyle factors also contribute a part.
- People with diabetes should not eat chocolate or sweets. If they are combined with exercise or they are eaten as part of a healthy meal plan, chocolate and sweets can be eaten by people who have diabetes. They are actually no more "off limits" to people who have diabetes, than they are to people who do not have diabetes.
- Eating a lot of sugar causes diabetes. This is also false because diabetes is usually caused by a combination of some lifestyle and genetic factors. But, being overweight normally puts an increase to your risk of developing type 2 diabetes. If there is a history of diabetes in your family, then you have to start exercising regularly and also eating a healthy meal plan in order to manage your weight.
- People who have diabetes should only eat special diabetic foods. The fact here is that a healthy meal plan for people who have diabetes is also the same as that for everybody - moderate in sugar and salt, low in saturated and trans fat, with every meal based only on whole grain foods, fruits and vegetables.
- People who have diabetes should only eat little amounts of foods that are starchy, like potatoes, bread, and pasta. You have to know that starchy foods are part of a good healthy meal plan. What is actually necessary here is the portion size. Whole grain pasta, breads, rice, cereals, and starchy vegetables such as yams, corn, potatoes, and peas can be added in your snacks and meals. The main thing is portions and for most people who have diabetes, having just 3-4 servings of food containing carbohydrate is about right.
- People who have diabetes usually get colds and other illnesses more often. This is false because having diabetes doesn't mean that you are likely to always get cold or any other sickness. But, people who have diabetes are normally advised to always get flu shots. This is mainly because all infection interferes with the management of your blood glucose, thereby putting you at great risk of high blood glucose levels and an increased risk of ketoacidosis for those with type 1 diabetes.

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- Insulin causes high blood pressure and atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries). This is not true because atherosclerosis is not caused by insulin. There is evidence that insulin normally initiate some of the very early processes which is in line with atherosclerosis in the laboratory. Because of this, some physicians were afraid that insulin can simply aggravate the hardening of the arteries and the development of high blood pressure. But it doesn't.
- Insulin causes weight gain, so insulin should not be taken because obesity is bad for you. Both the DCCT (Diabetes Control & Complications Trial) and the UKPDS (United Kingdom Prospective Diabetes Study) have shown that the benefit of glucose management with insulin is far higher than the risk of weight gain.
- Fruit is actually a food that is very healthy. So, it is OK to eat a lot of it as you want. Fruit is a food that is very healthy. It has vitamins, fiber and lots of minerals. Because fruit has carbohydrate, it needs to be added in your meal plan. You will have to talk to your dietitian about the frequency, amount, and types of fruits which you should eat.
- You don't have to change your diabetes regimen except your A1C is more than 8 percent. An A1C which is in the sevens actually does not show very good control and the better your glucose control the less likely you will have diabetes complications. The ADA goal is lower than 7 percent so the closer your A1C is to the right range which is less than 6 percent, the lesser your chances of having complications.

There is currently no permanent cure for diabetes but there are so many different types of treatment which is available.

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