

Type 2 Diabetes – Getting Started

What is Diabetes?

Diabetes means that your blood sugar is too high. It happens when the body can't use insulin properly or it can't make enough insulin. Insulin is needed to move sugar from the bloodstream into the cells. If your body isn't using insulin properly or isn't making enough insulin, the sugar builds up in the bloodstream, causing high blood sugar levels.

Types of Diabetes

There are three main types of diabetes. Type 1 Diabetes usually occurs in children or in young adults under age 30. Type 2 Diabetes is more common in adults, but even children develop it. Gestational Diabetes may occur during pregnancy. You have been diagnosed with Type 2 Diabetes.

Diagnosing Diabetes

Diabetes is diagnosed by measuring the level of sugar in the blood. A fasting test is done after having only water for at least eight hours. A random test or the Hemoglobin A1C test can be done at any time of day. The Hemoglobin A1C test shows your blood sugar over the past few months.

DIAGNOSIS	FASTING TEST	RANDOM TEST	Hemoglobin A1C
Diabetes	126 mg/dL or higher	200 mg/dL or higher and symptoms	Greater than 6.5%

Your Blood Sugar is _____

Your Hemoglobin A1C is _____

Symptoms of Type 2 Diabetes

Some people have many symptoms of diabetes, but others have none at all. Most symptoms clear up with treatment. Common symptoms of Type 2 Diabetes are fatigue; blurred vision; increased thirst; frequent urination; frequent infections; poor wound healing; dry, itchy skin; and numbness and tingling in hands, legs, and feet.

Will it go away?

There is no cure for diabetes. It does not go away. But people can live full and happy lives and manage their diabetes. Your provider and diabetes educators will help you learn to live well with diabetes.

Type 2 Diabetes Treatment

A food and activity plan is important for everyone that is diagnosed with diabetes. Medication may be used as well. Diabetes medication includes diabetes pills and insulin injections. Some people need medication right away, others don't. The best treatment is one that keeps your blood sugar in control.

Blood Sugar Monitor

You will receive a blood sugar monitor and instruction from a nurse. Testing your blood sugar helps you and your provider determine how well your treatment plan is working and if changes need to be made. Bring your monitor to all of your clinic appointments.

To start out, test your blood sugar when you wake up in the morning before you have anything to eat or drink. Also test it 2 hours after breakfast, lunch, and supper. Once your blood sugar is in good control, you may not need to test it so often.

Blood Sugar Goals

FASTING	Before Meals	2 Hours After Meals	Bedtime
80-120 mg/dl	70-130 mg/dl	<i>Less than</i> 160 mg/dl	100-140 mg/dl

Getting Started on Diet Changes

The food you eat affects your blood sugar levels. Foods contain carbohydrate, protein, and fat. Carbohydrates are the foods that affect blood sugar control. That doesn't mean carbohydrate foods are bad for you. They give you energy and contain important nutrients, vitamins, and minerals. Carbohydrate is found in starchy foods like bread, pasta, rice, cereal, corn, peas, and potatoes, as well as in fruit, milk, yogurt, and sweets. It's best to eat small amounts of carbohydrate spread throughout the day. Your provider will refer you to the dietitian for more information on eating with diabetes. Until then, try making some changes that will help improve your blood sugar such as:

- Drink water for thirst. Regular pop, Kool-Aid, and fruit juice will make your blood sugar high. Limit milk to 1 cup or 8 ounces per meal.
- Try not to skip meals. Eat meals and snacks at regular times each day.
- Try eating smaller portions. The more carbohydrate you eat at one time, the higher blood sugar goes.
- Eat a balanced diet with fruits, vegetables, whole grain foods, low-fat dairy products, and lean meats.
- Choose sweets less often.

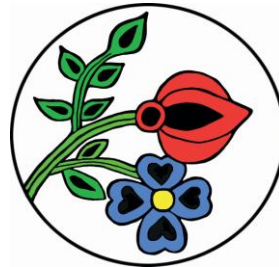
Getting Started with Activity

Physical activity can help lower blood sugar levels. Physical activity doesn't have to be hard to be good. Find activities you enjoy. Anything that gets you moving is a good step. Work towards 30 minutes of physical activity, such as walking, each day. Your blood sugar may go too low during or after activity if you take certain kinds of diabetes medicine. Carry a small carbohydrate snack, like a piece of fruit or a granola bar, with you during exercise in case this happens. Remember to check with your provider before starting any new activity.

Fond du Lac Human Services Diabetes Education Program

There are many things to learn about diabetes in order to live a healthy life. Our education program follows the curriculum set up by the American Diabetes Association. We offer individual appointments and group workshops led by certified diabetes educators and a registered dietitian. The program covers the following areas:

- What Is Diabetes?
- Learning to Live with Diabetes
- The Basics of Eating
- Food and Blood Sugar
- Planning Meals
- Grocery Shopping
- Physical Activity and Exercise
- Diabetes Medications
- Monitoring Your Diabetes
- Sick Day Care
- Stress and Coping
- Personal Health Habits
- Long-Term Complications
- Changing Behavior
- Putting the Pieces Together



If you haven't been scheduled for an education appointment, please call scheduling at 726-1370 (CAIR) or 878-2190 (MNAW) and request one.

Follow-up With Your Provider

If you haven't chosen a primary provider, we urge you to choose one now. Ask your provider how often he/she would like to see you for diabetes care. Call 726-1370 (CAIR) or 878-2190 (MNAW) if you need a provider appointment.

