

## WHAT IS DIABETES?



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Diabetes mellitus, commonly known as *diabetes* or *high blood sugar* is a disease that prevents your body from effectively using the energy (glucose) from the food you eat. Diabetes mellitus occurs when:

- The pancreas (an organ behind the stomach) produces little or no insulin.
- The pancreas makes insulin, but the insulin made does not work, as it should. This condition is called *insulin resistance*. *Insulin* is a naturally occurring hormone that helps the body use glucose for energy.

### DID YOU KNOW?

- One in every 16 people has diabetes.
- Diabetes is controllable even though there is no cure.
- Diabetes needs to be managed for lifetime.
- A person with diabetes is 5 times more likely to have heart disease than someone without diabetes.
- High blood sugar levels can damage blood vessels and over a long time lead to serious problems.
- There are two main types of diabetes: type 1 and type 2.
- Good blood sugar control decreases the risk of diabetes complications.

### TYPE 2 DIABETES

- In type 2 diabetes, the body still makes insulin, but it either does not make enough (*insulin deficiency*) or is unable to correctly use the insulin it does make (*insulin resistance*).
- Type 2 diabetes is called non-insulin dependent diabetes mellitus (even though type 2 diabetics may be treated with insulin).
- Treatment should include proper meal planning, exercise and possibly oral medicines and/or insulin.
- Type 2 is the most common form of diabetes, accounting for greater than 90% of the cases.
- Type 2 diabetes most often begins when people are over 40 and obese, although it being seen more frequently in children as the obesity rate in children increases.
- Exercising and staying lean are important in preventing or delaying the development of type 2 diabetes.

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### SYMPTOMS OF TYPE 2 DIABETES

- feeling tired
- dry mouth
- unexplained weight loss
- increased urination
- increased hunger
- increased thirst

Other symptoms may include: numbness or tingling of hands or feet, problems with sexual function, frequent infection or slow healing of sores.

### WHAT CAUSES DIABETES?

No one knows the exact cause of type 2 diabetes but it is more likely to occur in people who:

- are over 40 years of age
- are overweight
- have a family history of diabetes
- have had diabetes during pregnancy
- have given birth to a baby weighing over 9 pounds
- have high blood pressure are African American, Hispanic, and Native American
- have Polycystic Ovarian Disease

The tendency to develop type 2 diabetes is often inherited. This tendency is aggravated by weight gain and sedentary lifestyle. *Anyone having 3 or more of the above symptoms should be tested for diabetes.*

### TYPE 1 DIABETES

- In type 1 diabetes the body makes little or no insulin, resulting in insulin deficiency. This results in the blood sugar rising.
- The body is unable to use glucose for energy.
- Type 1 diabetics must take insulin shots.

### SYMPTOMS ARE THE ABRUPT ONSET OF:

- increased thirst
- increased urination
- increased hunger
- sudden weight loss
- feeling very tired.

### WHAT CAUSES TYPE 1 DIABETES?

Type 1 diabetes is related to a problem with the defense (immune) system that results in destruction of the insulin-making cells in the pancreas. This type of diabetes can also be inherited. Although it usually occurs when people are young, **it can occur at any age.**