

Pre-Diabetes: Are You at Risk?

Type 2 diabetes can start at any age. Diabetes can be managed. But, it also can put you at risk for a number of health issues such as kidney disease, vision problems, heart disease and stroke. Research has found it's almost always preceded by a condition called pre-diabetes.

In pre-diabetes, blood-glucose levels are higher than normal. But, levels are not quite high enough for a diabetes diagnosis. There is good news. If pre-diabetes is detected early enough, you can take steps to prevent or delay the start of Type 2 diabetes.

Who Gets Pre-Diabetes?

There are factors that may put some people at a greater risk for pre-diabetes. These include being age 45 or older, having a family history of diabetes, having undesirable cholesterol levels or high blood pressure, or being overweight or inactive. Some ethnic groups seem to have an increased risk, as well. But, anyone can develop pre-diabetes. Your doctor can help judge your risk.

How Is It Diagnosed?

There are two different tests that doctors commonly use to diagnose pre-diabetes. Both normally need to have you fast—or not eat—for a period of time. Then, your doctor will check your glucose levels either before you eat or after you drink a sugary substance on an empty stomach.

What Can You Do?

Being diagnosed with pre-diabetes gives you the chance to take action now to help delay or prevent Type 2 diabetes. Many people can get great results through lifestyle changes. If you've been diagnosed with pre-diabetes, your doctor may suggest the following:

- **Exercise.** Staying active is a great way to turn back the clock on diabetes. Just 30 minutes a day of moderate physical activity can make a difference. Work with your doctor to create a healthy exercise program for you.
- **Weight Loss.** Losing five to 10 percent of your body weight may help. Your doctor can work with you to set a realistic weight loss goal. You also can ask your doctor for tips on how to reach and stay at your target weight.
- **Regular screenings.** Regular blood sugar screenings allow your doctor to monitor your diabetes risk. If the condition does develop, you'll have the benefit of early detection.

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