



Diabetes

What is diabetes?

Diabetes means that your blood glucose (often called blood sugar) is too high. Your blood always has some glucose in it because your body needs glucose for energy to keep you going. But too much glucose in the blood can cause health problems.

How can I get diabetes?

Diabetes is caused by high blood glucose. Glucose comes from the food you eat and is made in your liver and muscles. Glucose is carried to all of the cells in your body by your blood. Insulin, which is made by the pancreas, is released into your blood. This helps the glucose from food get into cells. If your body doesn't produce enough insulin or if the insulin doesn't work the way it should, glucose is unable to enter the cells and instead stays in your blood. Your blood glucose levels can then get too high, which can cause diabetes.

What are the signs of diabetes?

The signs of diabetes are:

- Being very thirsty
- Urinating often
- Feeling very hungry or tired
- Losing weight without trying
- Having sores that heal slowly
- Having dry, itchy skin
- Losing the feeling in your feet or having tingling in your feet
- Having blurry eyesight

Are there different types of diabetes?

Yes. There are three main kinds of diabetes.

Type 1 diabetes: this is usually first diagnosed in children, teenagers or young adults. In this form of diabetes, the beta cells of the pancreas no longer make insulin because the body's immune system has attacked and destroyed them.

Type 2 diabetes: This is the most common form of diabetes. People can develop type 2 diabetes at any age, even during childhood. Type 2 diabetes usually begins with insulin resistance, a condition which fat, muscle and liver cells do not use insulin properly. At first, the pancreas keeps up with the added demand for more insulin, however, it eventually loses the ability to secrete enough insulin in response to meals.

Gestational diabetes: Some women develop this form of diabetes during the late stages of pregnancy due to hormones or the shortage of insulin. This form of diabetes usually goes away after the baby is born.

Who is at risk for getting diabetes?

Though it is not clearly defined, autoimmune, genetic and environmental factors are involved in developing type 1 diabetes.

The risk factors of Type 2 diabetes include:

- Older age
- Obesity
- Family history of diabetes
- Prior history of gestational diabetes
- Impaired glucose tolerance
- Physical inactivity
- Race/ethnicity

How is diabetes treated?

Type 1 diabetes is normally treated with insulin shots, wise food choices, exercise and controlling blood pressure and cholesterol.

Type 2 diabetes is treated with medications, wise food choices, exercise, aspirin and controlling blood pressure and cholesterol.

Are you at risk?

To find out if you are at risk for diabetes, use the score sheet on the back side of this sheet.



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Sedgwick County Health Department

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Are you at risk?

Protect yourself by knowing your risk for diabetes.

Diabetes means your blood sugar (glucose) is too high. How would you know? Are you often thirsty, hungry, or tired? Do you urinate often? Do you have sores that heal slowly, tingling in your feet, or blurry eyesight? Even without these signs, you could still have diabetes. Diabetes is a serious disease. It can cause heart attack or stroke, blindness, kidney failure, or loss of feet or legs. But diabetes can be controlled. You can reduce or avoid these health problems. Take the first step. Find out if you are at high risk.

For More Information

For more information on diabetes or diabetes blood sugar screenings, contact the Sedgwick County Health Department at 660-7300 or visit our website at www.sedgwickcounty.org.

For each Yes answer, add the number of points listed.

Question	Yes	No
Are you a woman who has had a baby weighing more than 9 pounds at birth?	1	0
Do you have a sister or brother with diabetes?	1	0
Do you have a parent with diabetes?	1	0
Is your body mass index (BMI) greater than 24.5? (BMI calculator available on Health Department webpage at www.sedgwickcounty.org)	5	0
Are you 65 years old and get little or no exercise in a typical day?	5	0
Are you between 45 and 64 years old?	5	0
Are you 65 years old or older?	9	0

Add your score If you scored...	Then your risk is...
10 or more points	High for having diabetes now. Please bring this form to your health care provider soon, or come to the Sedgwick County Health Department to test your blood sugar.
3–9 points	Probably low for having diabetes now. Be active most days. Don't use tobacco. Eat low-fat meals with fruits, vegetables, and whole-grain foods. If you have high cholesterol or high blood pressure, talk to your health care provider about your risk for diabetes.



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