

Diabetes Screening Fact Sheet

Date _____ Name _____

Today your blood sugar is _____

If you have any questions please call 645-7700, ext. 4249

What is diabetes?

Diabetes is a chronic (long-lasting) disease that affects how your body turns food into energy. If you have diabetes, your body either doesn't make enough insulin or can't use the insulin it makes as well as it should. According to the CDC, more than 30 million Americans have diabetes and 1 in 4 people don't know it. Diabetes can cause serious health problems including heart disease, vision loss and kidney disease.

What causes diabetes?

The cause of diabetes varies depending on your genetics, family history, ethnicity, health and environmental factors. The most common cause of Type 2 diabetes is a family history of it. Other causes for developing Type 2 diabetes may be a lack of exercise, an unhealthy diet, and being overweight or obese. Diabetes is more common in African Americans, Hispanic Latino Americans, American Indians/Alaska Natives, Pacific Islanders and some Asian Americans. Adults aged 45 and older are most commonly diagnosed with diabetes.

What is a fasting blood sugar?

A fasting blood sugar is one of the best indicators of a diabetes diagnosis. It measures your blood sugar after 8-12 hours of not eating, usually after sleeping overnight. A normal result should be 99 or below. 100-125 indicates prediabetes, and 126 or higher indicates you have diabetes. Speak with a health care professional about different tests to diagnose, like the A1C test which can tell your average blood sugar level over the past 2-3 months.

How many types of diabetes are there?

- ⇒ **Type 1 diabetes** occurs when the body doesn't make insulin. The immune system attacks and destroys the cells that make it. Type 1 diabetes is usually diagnosed in children and young adults, but it can appear at any age. Insulin needs to be taken every day with Type 1 diabetes to survive.
- ⇒ **Type 2 diabetes** occurs when your body doesn't make or doesn't use insulin well. It can occur at any age, but usually is diagnosed in middle-aged and older people, although it is increasing in children and young adults due to obesity. Type 2 diabetes is the most common type of diabetes.

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Atlantic County Executive, Dennis Levinson
Atlantic County Board of Commissioners
Maurcen Kern, Chairwoman

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- ⇒ **Gestational diabetes** develops in some women during pregnancy, and most of the time goes away after the baby is born. It increases the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes later in life.
- ⇒ **Prediabetes** is a condition that occurs when a person's blood glucose levels are higher than normal but not high enough for a diagnosis of Type 2 diabetes. According to the CDC, more than 1 in 3 adults have prediabetes and do not know they have it. Having prediabetes puts you at risk to develop Type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and stroke. Lifestyle changes like eating healthy, exercising more and maintaining a healthy weight can decrease your risk of developing Type 2 diabetes.

What are the symptoms of diabetes?

Early symptoms of diabetes can be unnoticeable, and most of the time there are none. When diabetes continues undiagnosed or not managed properly, the symptoms are: fatigue, excessive thirst, increased urination, weight loss, blurred vision, weakness, dry mouth, dry itchy skin, hunger, abdominal pain, slow healing sores, frequent infections, numbness or tingling in legs, feet, and fingers or red, swollen and/or tender gums.

What are the risk factors?

Overweight and obesity, physical inactivity, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, high glucose, ethnicity and having a family history of diabetes are some of the risk factors for diabetes.

How is diabetes treated?

The treatments depend on the type of diabetes and your health care provider. The goal is to bring the blood glucose to normal values. The treatment will most likely involve monitoring your blood sugar, physical activity aiming for 30 minutes most days of the week, healthy eating—focusing on high-fiber and low-fat foods, and possibly diabetes medication or insulin therapy.

*For more information visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes>



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