



Diabetes: Are you at risk?

Having diabetes means there's too much glucose, or sugar, in your blood. Many of the risk factors for diabetes can be controlled by a healthy lifestyle—things like eating healthy, losing weight and exercising. If you know your risks, you can make changes that may help prevent diabetes.

What is diabetes?¹

Diabetes is a condition in which blood glucose levels are too high because of the body's inability to make enough insulin or use insulin properly.

There are two key players:

- Glucose (sugar) is fuel for the body's cells
- Insulin takes glucose from the blood to the cells

In people with diabetes, the body makes little to no insulin, and/or the body prevents the cells from using the insulin it makes (insulin resistance). As a result, glucose cannot get into the cells, so it stays in the blood, causing high blood glucose (hyperglycemia).

There are two main types of diabetes

- **Type 1 diabetes.** The pancreas does not produce insulin, which causes a buildup of glucose (sugar) in your bloodstream.
- **Type 2 diabetes.** The pancreas still makes insulin, but the insulin doesn't do its job as it should. Glucose just hangs around and builds up in the blood. Initially, the pancreas makes even more insulin to get glucose to go into the cells, but eventually gets worn out from working so hard and doesn't produce as much insulin.

Prediabetes is when a person's blood sugar level is higher than normal, but not high enough to constitute a diabetes diagnosis. This puts a person at a greater risk of developing Type 2 diabetes in the future.

Warning signs of diabetes²

Talk to your healthcare provider if you experience any of the following:

- Frequent urination
- Blurry vision
- Being unusually thirsty or hungry
- Cuts and bruises that are slow to heal
- Being unusually tired or fatigued
- Tingling, pain or numbness in the hands/feet
- Feeling grumpy regularly
- Unexplained weight changes

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Are you at risk?⁴

Take the diabetes risk assessment to determine your risk. Use the results of this assessment to discuss your risk of diabetes with your healthcare provider. Use the boxes on the right to write your score for each question, and then add up your total score at the end.

Your diabetes risk assessment		Points
1. What is your age?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than 40 years (0 points) • 40–49 years (1 point) • 50–59 years (2 points) • 60 years or older (3 points) 	
2. Are you a man or a woman?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Man (1 point) • Woman (0 points) 	
3. If you're a woman, do you have a history of gestational diabetes or polycystic ovary syndrome?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes (1 point) • No (0 points) • N/A (0 points) 	
4. Do you have a family history of diabetes (for example, your mother, father, sister or brother)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes (1 point) • No (0 points) 	
5. Have you ever been diagnosed with high blood pressure?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes (1 point) • No (0 points) 	
6. Are you physically active (for example, do you get 150 minutes of exercise each week)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes (0 points) • No (1 point) 	
7. Are you overweight, obese or extremely obese (use the chart on the next page to help determine which category you fit into)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normal weight (0 points) • Overweight (1 point) • Obese (2 points) • Extremely obese (3 points) 	
8. What race or ethnicity best describes you?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White/Caucasian (0 points) • American-Indian or Alaska Native (1 point) • Asian-American (1 point) • Black or African-American (1 point) • Hispanic or Latino (1 point) • Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (1 point) • Other (0 points) 	
Your total score		

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Diabetes risk assessment results

If your total score was greater than or equal to 5, you are at an increased risk for Type 2 diabetes.⁴ If you are at high risk, see your healthcare provider for a simple blood test to check for diabetes.

Some questions you may want to ask include:

- Should I get a diabetes screening test?
- What different tests are available?
- What are the pros and cons of each test?
- What can I do to lower my risk for diabetes?
- What are the symptoms of diabetes?
- If I am diagnosed with diabetes, what are my treatment options?

Schedule your screening today!

If you think you're at risk for diabetes, talk to your healthcare provider about being screened as soon as possible. It's important to get the treatment you need to prevent or delay complications.

References

- ¹Centers for Disease Control and Prevention <http://www.cdc.gov/media/presskits/aa/d/diabetes.pdf>
- ²American Diabetes Association <http://www.diabetes.org/diabetes-basics/symptoms/>
- ³American Diabetes Association <http://www.diabetes.org/diabetes-basics/diagnosis/>
- ⁴American Diabetes Association <http://www.diabetes.org/are-you-at-risk/diabetes-risk-test/>
- ⁵Adapted from Bang et al, Ann Intern Med 151:775-783, 2009. Original algorithm was validated without gestational diabetes as part of the model.

Reference chart for your diabetes risk assessment ⁵			
Height	Weight		
4' 10"	119-142	143-190	191+
4' 11"	124-147	148-197	198+
5' 0"	128-152	153-203	204+
5' 1"	132-157	158-210	211+
5' 2"	136-163	164-217	218+
5' 3"	141-168	169-224	225+
5' 4"	145-173	174-231	232+
5' 5"	150-179	180-239	240+
5' 6"	155-185	186-246	247+
5' 7"	159-190	191-254	255+
5' 8"	164-196	197-261	262+
5' 9"	169-202	203-269	270+
5' 10"	174-208	209-277	278+
5' 11"	179-214	215-285	286+
6' 0"	184-220	221-293	294+
6' 1"	189-226	227-301	302+
6' 2"	194-232	233-310	311+
6' 3"	200-239	240-318	319+
6' 4"	205-245	246-327	328+
	1 point	2 points	3 points
If you weigh less than the amount in the left column: 0 points			

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