

ADULT HEALTH BULLETIN



NOVEMBER 2017

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: DIABETES



World Diabetes Day is celebrated annually on November 14. World Diabetes Day was created to raise awareness of diabetes, a disease that raises blood sugars. Diabetes can result in problems with other organs and significantly increases the risk of heart disease, stroke and death.

What is diabetes?

Diabetes is a condition where the blood sugar is too high. The body controls blood sugar with the help of a hormone called insulin. People with diabetes don't have enough insulin or can't use insulin well. The body does not use or produce insulin as it should. Produced by the pancreas, insulin is a hormone that is needed to change the sugar in certain foods into energy for the body. The most common form of diabetes in adults is called type 2 diabetes or adult onset diabetes.

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The CDC estimates that 40.1 percent of Kentuckians age 40-75 are pre-diabetic.

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Different types of diabetes

- **Type 1:** The body's immune system attacks and destroys its own insulin-producing cells in the pancreas.
- **Type 2:** The body begins to become resistant to insulin, a disorder in which the body's cells do not use insulin properly.
- **Gestational Diabetes:** A form of glucose intolerance that develops or is discovered during pregnancy.
- **Pre-Diabetes:** A condition resulting in higher-than-normal blood glucose levels, but not high enough to be diagnosed as type 2 diabetes.

If you have diabetes, you're not alone. Diabetes is a serious condition, but you can still live a long and healthy life! Here's what you need to do.

Symptoms and signs of diabetes

Many cases of diabetes go undiagnosed for long periods of time while causing permanent damage to the body. Some common signs and symptoms include:

- Hunger
- Fatigue
- Frequent urination
- Constant thirst
- Blurred vision
- Tingling, pain or numbness in feet/hands
- Cuts/bruises that are slow to heal
- Weight loss — even though you are eating more (type 1)

Can diabetes be prevented?

Studies have shown that type 2 diabetes can be prevented or delayed by taking care of your body. First, ensure that you are not overweight or obese. If you are overweight or obese, just losing a few pounds and exercising moderately can help prevent or delay the development of diabetes. One of the most important steps is to see a healthcare professional as soon as any symptoms develop and regularly if you have been diagnosed with pre-diabetes or diabetes.

Take care of your body

1. Eat a healthy balanced diet.

- Eat more vegetables and fruit and less candy, sweets, chips and fried food.
- Drink water instead of sugary drinks or juice.
- Cook more meals at home.

2. Add more movement to your routine.

- Exercise for at least 30 minutes a day, five days a week.
- Walk during your lunch break.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator or escalator.

3. See your doctor regularly.

- Get checked for high blood pressure, A1C levels or abnormal cholesterol levels.
- Do a foot exam to check for changes in feeling and any sores.
- Get your eyes checked once a year.
- Test your urine to check for kidney disease.

4. Other things you can do:

- If you smoke, quit now.
- Brush and floss your teeth every day. See your dentist twice a year.
- Get a flu shot once a year.



As we age, the risk of developing diabetes increases. **Don't wait.** Talk to your healthcare provider to help you make simple changes in your eating and physical activity routines. Early detection and treatment of diabetes can decrease the risk of developing complications.

RESOURCES:

- <https://www.idf.org/wdd-index/about.html>
- <http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/info/dpqi/cd/generalinfodiabetes.htm>
- <http://www.diabetes.org/diabetes-basics/symptoms/?loc=db-slabnav>

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