

Know Your Risk for Type 2 Diabetes



38% of adults in the U.S. have prediabetes and many don't know it, according to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Diabetes can cause serious health problems including, but not limited to, stroke, heart disease, blindness, and lower limb amputations. It is currently the 7th leading cause of death in the United States with Type 2 diabetes accounting for 90 to 95% of all diagnosed cases of diabetes.

While some risk factors like family history and age can't be changed, it's possible to prevent or delay Type 2 diabetes by eating a healthy diet, exercising regularly, and maintaining a healthy body weight. Know your risk and talk to a healthcare provider about which tests, preventive screenings, and lifestyle changes may be right for you.

Stay Active and Manage a Healthy Weight

Get physical activity three or more times a week. The CDC recommends 150 minutes each week of aerobic activity combined with muscle-strengthening activities on two or more days a week.

If you are between the ages of 35 and 70 and are overweight or obese, the United States Preventive Services Task Force recommends screening for diabetes every three years even if you are asymptomatic. Discuss weight management options with your provider — losing just 10 to 15 pounds can make a difference.

Background

Black, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian/Alaska Native persons are at a greater risk for developing prediabetes and Type 2 diabetes. Additionally, if you have a parent or sibling with Type 2 diabetes, you are more likely to have prediabetes and develop diabetes. Let a provider know about your family health history of diabetes so they can develop a plan with you.

Pregnancy

50% of women who developed gestational diabetes during pregnancy are at risk of developing Type 2 diabetes. If you had gestational diabetes, blood sugar should be tested as early as four to six weeks after baby is born. Even if you did not have gestational diabetes, get your blood sugar tested six to twelve weeks after baby is born and every one to three years after to ensure your levels are on target.