

What is Type 2 Diabetes?

Type 2 Diabetes is the most common form of diabetes.

There are many reasons why you may develop Type 2 Diabetes.

Family history, age and even ethnicity play a part. As does inactivity, poor food choices, and being overweight.

When you eat, your body breaks the food down into a simple sugar called glucose.

Glucose is absorbed into your blood, causing your blood glucose (or blood sugar) to rise. But glucose can't get to your cells on its own. It needs the help of the hormone insulin.

Insulin guides glucose into your cells.

Your cells can then use the glucose as fuel.

But when you have Type 2 Diabetes, your body doesn't make enough insulin, or your cells cannot use it well. This is called insulin resistance.

When too much glucose stays in your bloodstream, it leads to high blood sugar, causing problems all over your body.

Type 2 Diabetes increases your risk of heart attack, stroke, circulation problems, kidney disease, eye disease, and nerve problems.

But you can take control and help reduce your risk of developing complications by keeping your blood sugar in a healthy range and reducing insulin resistance.

Your doctor is there to help you every step of the way.

Other members of your care team may include a nurse, registered dietitian, exercise specialist, pharmacist, podiatrist, ophthalmologist, social worker and counselor or psychologist – all of whom may be certified diabetes care and education specialists, or CDCES's.

Together, you will decide on a blood sugar range that is right for you, based on your health, age, activity level and other factors.

You will also set an A1C goal. When you get your blood tests done at a lab, your A1C number tells your doctor how well your blood sugar has been managed over the last couple of months.

Once you know your numbers and have set your goals, you can take steps to get your blood sugar levels in a healthy range and keep them there.

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So with the help of your doctor, begin to make lifestyle changes to lose weight, eat better, and move more.

Start by making healthy food choices.

Regular physical exercise will also help you lose weight.

The biggest improvement in blood sugar level comes with a 5-7% loss of body weight so that's a good goal to start with.

Monitor your blood sugar level and take any medicines that you are prescribed to further manage your blood sugar level.

Work with your doctor to reach your blood sugar goals and improve your overall health for today and for your future.