

Learning About Type 2 Diabetes

When you find out you have type 2 diabetes, it can help to learn more about what diabetes is, what it means for you, and what you can do to help manage it.

Having type 2 diabetes means there is too much sugar—glucose—in your blood. Glucose is a type of sugar made from the food you eat.

Insulin is a hormone that's made by your pancreas. Insulin and glucose are supposed to work together.

Your body needs insulin to move sugar from the blood to other parts of the body where the sugar is used for energy or stored in case it's needed later.

Insulin acts like tiny keys that open your body's cell doors to let glucose in. If you have diabetes, the keys don't always fit the way they're supposed to or there are not enough keys. When this happens, your cells don't get the sugar they need and too much sugar builds up in your blood.

Having high blood sugar over time can lead to type 2 diabetes.

Some people don't feel any different when their blood sugar is too high. But you may notice certain things, such as feeling very thirsty or needing to urinate more often than usual. You may also have blurry vision.

This may seem like a lot. But your doctor can help you learn more about small steps you can take that will help you manage your diabetes.

Your doctor may also suggest working with a diabetes educator. This person works as part of your care team to help you find ways to live better with diabetes.