



Diabetes



Overview

You need to pay attention to your body more than other kids do. You have to watch what you eat and when you eat it. The doctor says you have "diabetes." But what is it, exactly? Let's learn all about it.

How we get energy

We get energy from the things we eat and drink. Much of this energy is from a sugar we call "glucose." It goes into your blood, and it's carried to all the different parts of your body. But to become energy, glucose has to get inside your body's cells. There's a special key that opens the cells to let glucose in. And that key is something we call "insulin."

A problem with insulin

Most people's bodies make insulin, and insulin lets the glucose into the cells. But if you have diabetes, things don't work this easily. Your body may not be able to make insulin, or it may not make enough. Or, maybe it makes insulin, but the insulin just can't unlock the cells. Glucose gets trapped in your blood, and your body doesn't get the energy it needs. This makes you feel bad, and it's bad for your health.

Dealing with diabetes

So, how do we deal with diabetes? Well, you need to eat a healthy diet and get plenty of exercise. We may need to watch the glucose in your blood very closely. Sometimes you may need a special snack or drink during the day. And, some kids get insulin every day. Your doctor will make a plan just for you.