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NOVEMBER
AMERICAN DIABETES MONTH

Understand Diabetes

Know the Signs. Support Prevention.

Diabetes happens when there is too much sugar (glucose) in the blood. Glucose needs insulin to move into the body's cells for energy. Diabetes develops when the body does not make insulin, does not make enough insulin, or does not use it properly.

Types of Diabetes

- **Type 1:** The body makes little or no insulin
- **Type 2:** The body does not use insulin properly and/or does not make enough of it
- **Prediabetes:** Blood sugar is higher than normal, but not high enough for a diabetes diagnosis
- **Gestational diabetes:** Occurs during pregnancy and may increase future diabetes risk.

Common Signs and Symptoms

- Frequent urination, unusual thirst, extreme hunger, unexplained weight loss, fatigue, irritability, and blurry vision.

Important: Some people may have no symptoms. Early screening and treatment can help prevent complications.

Who Is at Risk?

- You may have a higher risk of diabetes if you have a family history of the condition, are physically inactive, are age 45 or older, have overweight or obesity, have had gestational diabetes, or have delivered a baby weighing more than 9 pounds. Risk may also be higher for some racial and ethnic groups.
- Type 1 diabetes risk factors may include family history or damage to the pancreas.

Why Diabetes Matters

Diabetes can increase the risk of heart disease, stroke, poor circulation, foot problems, infections and slow healing, kidney disease, eye disease, vision loss, and severe tissue damage.

Healthy Steps That Can Help

- Maintain a healthy weight, be physically active regularly, eat balanced meals at regular times, increase fiber intake, limit saturated and trans fats, follow your doctor's advice for screening and care, and monitor blood sugar as directed.
- Adults ages 40 to 70 who are overweight or obese should ask their doctor about screening for abnormal blood sugar and type 2 diabetes.

Know the Warning Signs

- **Low Blood Sugar (Hypoglycemia):** Shakiness, sweating, dizziness, confusion, blurred vision, mood changes, and fainting. If the person is awake and can swallow, give a fast-acting source of sugar such as juice, regular soda, glucose tablets, or hard candy. If the person passes out or cannot swallow, call 911 immediately.
- **High Blood Sugar (Hyperglycemia):** Extreme thirst, frequent urination, blurred vision, nausea, fatigue, and dry skin. If high blood sugar happens often, contact a doctor right away.

How to Support Someone with Diabetes

Learn about diabetes from trusted sources, support healthy eating habits, exercise together when appropriate, and recognize signs of high or low blood sugar and respond quickly.

Take Charge This American Diabetes Month

Diabetes affects millions of Americans, but with early detection, medical care, healthy habits, and support, it can be managed.

Talk with your doctor or health care provider about your risk, screening, and prevention steps.



Sources:

- https://healthylearn.com/connerstrong/hn/4-ways-to-help-other-with-diabetes.html
- https://healthylearn.com/connerstrong/hc/diabetes.html

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