

HEALTH TIPS

Make Health Happen

What is diabetes?

LIVING WITH DIABETES IS A LEARNING PROCESS. EVEN IF SOME CHANGES ARE NEEDED, MOST PEOPLE WITH DIABETES STILL LEAD A NORMAL, ACTIVE LIFE.

What is diabetes?

Diabetes occurs when your body cannot make enough of a hormone called *insulin* or cannot use insulin properly.

Our bodies turn most of what we eat and drink into a type of sugar called *glucose*. Glucose travels through the bloodstream.

Insulin helps turn glucose into energy. If you have diabetes, that process does not work right. Glucose builds up in the blood and passes out of the body in the urine. Your body does not get the fuel it needs.

Words to know

Glucose: A simple sugar used by the body as its main source of energy

Hyperglycemia: High blood sugar level

Hypoglycemia: Low blood sugar level

Insulin: A hormone that helps the body turn glucose into energy

What are the main types of diabetes?

Check the type you have:

___ **Type 1 diabetes** – This is a less common form of diabetes. With this type, the body does not produce insulin.

___ **Type 2 diabetes** – Around 95 percent of people with diabetes have Type 2. The body develops insulin resistance and can't properly use insulin.

What can I do?

Be sure to see your doctor often. He or she will help you make a plan for controlling your diabetes. The more you know about diabetes, the better you will be at living with it.

Here are a few questions you may want to ask your doctor:

- What is my blood sugar level, and how do I keep it under control?
- What should I do if my blood sugar level is too high or low?
- What tests do I need?
 - ___ Eye exam each year
 - ___ Hemoglobin test each year
 - ___ LDL screening each year
 - ___ Kidney function each year



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Helpful phone numbers for UniCare members only

Customer Care Center: 1-800-782-0095 (TTY 1-866-378-1634)

MedCall: 1-888-850-1108 (TTY 1-800-368-4424)

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Write down other questions here:

1. _____

2. _____

Tips for living with diabetes:

- Take medication.
- Check blood sugar levels regularly.
- Eat three meals a day, four or five hours apart.
- Plan meals and snacks.
- Avoid high-sugar foods and drinks.
- Become more active.

Learn more about living well with diabetes at diabetes.org.

Source:

American Diabetes Association website: (accessed on September 20, 2013): diabetes.org.

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