

# Diabetes:

*20 Million Americans have diabetes  
1.3 million more will get it this year*

## **ARE YOU AT RISK ?**

### **What is diabetes?**

Diabetes is a disease that results in blood sugar levels going too high. Type 1 diabetes happens because an organ called the pancreas stops making insulin. Type 2 diabetes happens when a person's insulin doesn't work well enough. About 90% of all cases of diabetes are type 2. Although people usually get it when they are adults, more and more children and teens are getting type 2 diabetes, because they are overweight and do not exercise enough.

### **Who gets diabetes?**

People get diabetes partly because they inherit the risk; they have a family history of diabetes. Most people who get diabetes are overweight (50% of men, and 70% of women). By controlling your weight you can reduce your risk of getting diabetes. There are other risk factors too. Find out if you are at risk for getting diabetes. Put a check mark in every box that applies to you....



### **Take the Diabetes Risk Factor Quiz**

- Someone in my family has diabetes
- I'm overweight
- I'm over 30 years old (but type 2 diabetes can strike overweight children)
- I'm: African American, Hispanic, Native American, Asian, or Pacific Islander
- I have high blood pressure
- I have abnormal blood fats (high triglycerides, high cholesterol, or low HDL )
- I have heart disease
- I don't exercise enough
- I had diabetes when I was pregnant (gestational diabetes)
- I gave birth to a baby that weighed over 9 pounds
- I have polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS)
- I have dark patches of skin on back of neck or underarms

If you checked any of these boxes then you may be at risk for getting diabetes. The more boxes you checked, the higher your risk is of getting diabetes, or of already having diabetes.

**FACT:** Did you know that almost 1/3 of the people who have diabetes don't even know it yet?  
Most people have diabetes at least five years before they are diagnosed with the disease.

## How do I know if I have diabetes?

Anyone who has risk factors for diabetes should get their blood sugar tested at a lab. Then you should repeat the blood test at least every three years. Compare your results to the following:

### Fasting Blood Glucose (no food for at least 8 hours)

*Normal* is less than 100 mg/dl  
*Pre-diabetes* is 100-125 mg/dl  
*Diabetes* is 126 mg/dl or higher

**40 million Americans have pre-diabetes** and half of them will likely go on to get diabetes. The best prevention is weight control and exercise!



## How can I prevent getting diabetes?

Studies show that lifelong weight control and exercise are the best ways to prevent diabetes. So, choose to eat healthy and include daily exercise.

Limit These Foods	Choose These Foods
Fatty foods, fast foods, and fried foods	Lean meats and lowfat dairy products
Juices, sugary drinks and sodas	Diet drinks, Crystal Light, diet Snapple
Pastries, candies, and high calorie desserts	Fresh fruits and vegetables
Refined grains and sweetened cereals	Whole grains, wheat bread, brown rice

Try to walk or do any favorite exercise at least 30 minutes a day... and it doesn't even have to be all at once! Just have fun and get moving!



## What if I already have diabetes?

Some people can control their blood sugar just by eating right, controlling weight and exercising. Other people need pills or insulin in addition to healthy living. The goal is blood sugar control. Uncontrolled diabetes can cause serious complications to your health. Controlling blood sugar means getting the right information. A dietitian can help you find a healthy eating plan that you can live with and enjoy. If you have diabetes you'll need a blood sugar monitor for home use. The new ones on the market require very little blood and are practically painless. Your health care provider can give you more information on what your blood sugar targets should be and discuss your treatment plan.

## How can I learn more?

- ✓ You can make an appointment with one of our dietitians by calling 353-2291
- ✓ You can go to a diabetes class at UCSF. For more information call 353-9065
- ✓ Visit the website of the American Diabetes Association at <http://www.diabetes.org>