



DIABETES

What is Diabetes?

Diabetes is an illness that happens when our body does not process food correctly and sugar builds up in the blood. The food we eat turns into different substances like proteins, fats, sugars, and water. Sugar is a great source of energy. To use the sugar for energy, insulin is needed to get sugar from the blood into our cells. Insulin is made in the pancreas. Diabetes can happen because your pancreas has stopped making enough insulin or the insulin is not working as well as it should. People who have diabetes have higher risk for heart disease, blindness, kidney failure and lower extremity amputations. Diabetes is the seventh leading cause of death in the U.S.

Three Types of Diabetes:

Type 1: Develops in children, but can happen at any age. Some signs are sudden weight loss, increased thirst and going to the bathroom often. Type 1 is usually confirmed by the presence of high blood sugar long after eating. This type of diabetes is usually treated with insulin.

Type 2: More often seen in adults and the elderly. It is now seen more often in young children, who are overweight or obese. Type 2 can be controlled by a change in diet and exercise. Medicines that help to lower blood sugar are used. In some cases, insulin is needed to keep the blood sugar normal.

Gestational Diabetes (GDM): This form of diabetes happens during pregnancy. It usually goes away after the baby is born.

Six Tips for taking control

Tip 1: If you are prescribed insulin, or a pill to help lower your blood sugar, take it exactly as prescribed. Always follow your doctor's advice. Do not change how the medication is used without talking to your doctor first! If you do not need a medicine, then follow these next 5 steps.

Tip 2: Get More Exercise

There are many benefits to staying physically active. Exercise can help you:

- Lose weight
- Lower your blood sugar
- Give you more energy

Tip 3: Get Plenty of Fiber

- It can lower your risk of heart disease
- Fiber promotes weight loss by helping you feel full
- Foods high in fiber include fruits, vegetables, beans, whole grains, nuts and seeds

Tip 4: Go for Whole Grains

A whole grain contains edible parts of the grain. The whole grain may be used intact or recombined, as long as all components are present in natural proportions. To recognize whole grains, keep this list handy when you go to the grocery store and choose any of the following grains:

- Whole oats/oatmeal
- Popcorn
- Brown rice
- 100% whole wheat flour

Tip 5: Lose Excess Weight

Regular exercise lowers the risk of developing diabetes.

Tip 6: Make Healthier Choices

Make healthier choices by eating a variety of foods and using portion control. It is best to eat less of each food group instead of not eating some food groups at all.