



DIABETES

Diabetes comes in two different forms, type 1 diabetes and type 2 diabetes. Type 1 diabetics lack a hormone called insulin, which allows the body to use the blood sugar glucose for energy. This type of diabetes is often referred to as juvenile diabetes because its onset usually occurs during childhood. Type 2 diabetes is often referred to as adult onset diabetes, although its prevalence is increasing among younger aged people. Type 2 diabetics have enough insulin but do not have enough insulin receptors, which allow the body's cells to import the glucose.

Think the following analogy of a coal stove: Insulin is your shovel, glucose is the pieces of coal, and the cell is your coal stove. People with type 1 diabetes do not have enough shovels to put the coal into the stove. People with type 2 diabetes have enough shovels, but the opening to the stove isn't big enough for the shovel to fit.

Symptoms of diabetes include:

- Frequent urination
- Excessive thirst
- Weight loss
- Extreme hunger
- Sudden changes in vision
- Numbness or abnormal sensations in hands or feet
- Tiredness
- Abnormally dry skin
- Poor-healing sores
- Increased susceptibility to infections

Risk factors for diabetes are different for type 1 and type 2. Type 1 diabetes is usually genetic and cannot be prevented. Type 2 on the other hand, is preventable. Risk factors for type 2 diabetes include:

- Older age
- Family history of diabetes
- Obesity

- Physical inactivity

Since obesity and inactivity are two of the biggest risk factors that have been linked to diabetes, it is important to maintain an active and healthy lifestyle. Keep yourself at a healthy body weight and try to include 30 minutes aerobic exercise into your daily routine.

It is also important to eat a well balanced diet with appropriate portions sizes (see link to portion sizes page). Choose more lean meats, fruits, vegetables and whole grains.

For more information, visit these websites:

American Dietetic Association
<http://www.eatright.org>

National Diabetes Education Program
<http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/projects/ndeps.htm>

American Diabetes Association
<http://www.diabetes.org>

For general overview on meal planning:

http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/tutorials/diabetesmealplanning/htm/no_50_no_0.htm

http://ndep.nih.gov/diabetes/MealPlanner/en_intro.htm

For more about carbohydrates:

<http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/what-should-you-eat/carbohydrates/>

http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/nutrition/nutrition_for_everyone/basics/carbohydrates.htm