

Diabetes Mellitus

What is diabetes mellitus?

Diabetes mellitus (also referred to simply as diabetes) is a disease that alters how the body uses glucose (blood sugar). People with diabetes have an excess of glucose in their blood, which cause health complications.

Did You Know?

According to the American Diabetes Association, approximately 29.1 million Americans have diabetes.



There are three general types of diabetes mellitus.

What are the different types of diabetes?

There are three general types of diabetes, **type I**, **type II**, and **gestational** (expectant mothers).

Generally, type I diabetes begins in childhood or young adulthood. It comprises only 5% of diabetes cases. In this type of diabetes, the body fails to produce the hormone insulin. Insulin carries glucose from the blood to the cells to be used to produce energy. Lack of insulin causes glucose to build up in the bloodstream.



Type I diabetes is often diagnosed in children.

Type II diabetes is far more common than type I, diagnosed in 90-95% of all diabetes cases. Also unlike type I, type II diabetes is usually diagnosed in adults. In this type of diabetes, the body cannot correctly use insulin. This causes the body to produce more insulin to counteract this disability. However, it eventually cannot keep up with rising glucose levels.



Gestational diabetes is experienced by pregnant women.

Gestational diabetes is experienced by pregnant women and, like all other types, causes high levels of glucose in the blood. It is likely caused by hormones produced by the placenta that hinder the function of insulin. This usually just causes spikes in blood sugar after meals, but can cause blood sugar levels to remain elevated and endanger the growing fetus. Women who have experienced

gestational diabetes are at risk for developing type II diabetes postpartum.

What is insulin?

Insulin is a key hormone that is made in the pancreas. When there is glucose in the blood stream, the pancreas secretes insulin to help the body use the glucose by carrying it from the blood into

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Type II diabetes can cause heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, impaired vision, kidney disease, damage to the nervous system, limb problems which may require amputation, gum disease, mental health issues (e.g. depression), skin problems, and pregnancy complications.

Gestational diabetes can have negative effects on unborn children as well as pregnant women. Babies born to mothers with gestational diabetes can be born too early, resulting in respiratory problems; they may grow too large before birth, leading to complications during labor; they may have low blood sugar due to an excess of insulin; and they are at greater risk of developing type II diabetes and becoming obese later in life.

How is diabetes treated?

People with any type of diabetes can do things to control the disease, such as eating a healthy and balanced diet that is low in simple sugars, exercising regularly, keeping track of their blood glucose, and, in some cases, taking insulin and/or medications.



Diabetes can be controlled with a healthy diet and exercise, and, in some cases, insulin injections.

Reading Comprehension Questions:

1. What is
2. What
3. What is common to all three types?
4. When
5. What is
6. List
7. List
8. List three potential effects of diabetes (indicate which type it may be due to).

Extension Questions:

9. If there
10. What do you think is a good way to prevent type II diabetes?
11. There is another kind of diabetes, diabetes insipidus. What are its symptoms? What can it lead to?
12. Create an

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