



# Get the lowdown on diabetes

## Here's a closer look at this condition



Diabetes is a condition where the body can't make insulin, or can't use it well. Insulin is a hormone that helps our bodies get energy from the glucose in the food we eat. Without it, glucose levels in the blood stream are too high. Over time, this can cause damage to your body tissue and organs.<sup>1</sup> There are three main types of diabetes.<sup>1</sup>

- **Type 1 diabetes** can affect anyone, but most often it develops in children or young adults. People with this type of diabetes produce very little insulin, or none at all.
- **Type 2 diabetes** is the most common type. People with type 2 diabetes either make too little insulin, or their bodies aren't able to use it as they should.
- **Gestational diabetes (GDM)** is a form of diabetes that appears during pregnancy. While GDM usually goes away after pregnancy, it puts women and their babies at higher risk for type 2 diabetes.

### Who's more likely to get type 2 diabetes?<sup>2</sup>

Checking some of these boxes puts you at a higher risk.

- I'm overweight
- I'm 60 or older
- I've had diabetes during pregnancy
- I'm African American, Alaska Native, American Indian, Asian American, Hispanic or Pacific Islander American



### Need a doctor? We can help!

It's a good idea to talk to your doctor about keeping a healthy weight. To find a doctor, visit [empireblue.com](http://empireblue.com) or call us at the number on the back of your member ID card.



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Sources:  
1 International Diabetes Federation website: *About Diabetes* (accessed April 2018): [idf.org](http://idf.org).  
2 National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases website: *Am I at Risk for Type 2 Diabetes? Taking Steps to Lower Your Risk of Getting Diabetes* (accessed April 2018): [diabetes.niddk.nih.gov/dm/pubs/riskfortype2](http://diabetes.niddk.nih.gov/dm/pubs/riskfortype2).  
3 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website: *Tips From Former Smokers: Smoking and Diabetes* (accessed April 2018): [cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/diseases/diabetes](http://cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/diseases/diabetes).  
4 International Diabetes Federation website: *Prevention* (accessed April 2018): [idf.org](http://idf.org).

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## Keeping type 2 diabetes at bay <sup>2-4</sup>

- **Break a sweat.** Exercise for 30 to 60 minutes every day.
- **Get to or stay at a healthy body weight.** Each pound you lose lowers your risk.
- **Catch the right amount of Zzzs.** Make sure you're getting enough rest every night. Sleeping less than six hours or more than nine hours can put you at a higher risk.
- **Make healthy food choices.** Eat more fruits and veggies, and pay attention to your portion sizes. Limit foods that are high in sugar, fat or sodium.
- **Kick the habit.** The more cigarettes you smoke, the higher your risk for type 2 diabetes. Quitting smoking can be hard — get help if you need it.<sup>3</sup>
- **Keep an eye on your blood sugar.** If you're concerned about your blood sugar, talk to your doctor about when and how often you should get tested for diabetes.

Remember, type 2 diabetes can be prevented and controlled. During your next doctor's visit, talk about your risk factors for a little extra peace of mind.



### Find local support and resources

If you're dealing with diabetes, visit the American Diabetes Association website at [diabetes.org](https://diabetes.org). Check out what's available in your community, like a local support group that can help you learn useful tips.