

Diabetes Awareness Month

Diabetes is a chronic condition that results from the body not producing or using insulin properly. Insulin is a hormone that helps control blood sugar levels and converts food into energy stored by your body. Symptoms of diabetes vary a lot, but include frequent urination, excessive thirst, extreme hunger, unusual weight loss, increased fatigue, irritability, and blurry vision. It can often go undiagnosed in its early stages when there are no symptoms or warning signs are mild. High blood sugar will damage the body, leading to other health complications like heart disease, kidney disease, nerve damage, and vision loss. If you're experiencing any of these symptoms or are concerned about diabetes, talk with your health care provider about being screened.

The good news is that prediabetes and type 2 diabetes are largely preventable with a healthy lifestyle. Research shows that you can significantly lower your risk for type 2 diabetes by losing 7% of your body weight and exercising moderately (such as brisk walking) for 30 minutes a day, five days a week ([Source: ADA](#)). If you're overweight and have prediabetes, losing 5% of your weight can help reverse prediabetes. If you're unable to lose weight, you may be able to lower your blood glucose by eating well and being active. ([Source: CDC](#))



Participate in the following activities to learn more:

Activity 1: [Move with a Doc: How to Avoid Type 2 Diabetes](#)

Activity 2: [Types of Diabetes – Knowledge Test](#)

Activity 3: [The Role of Carbohydrates](#)

In the U.S., 37.3 million Americans—about 1 in 10—have diabetes, and 96 million American adults—more than 1 in 3—have prediabetes. Diabetes is the eighth leading cause of death in the U.S. ([Source: CDC](#))

Questions? [Send us an email.](#)

Health Disparities

“Health disparities” are preventable differences in health among different social or racial groups. Health Disparities are a complex and challenging problem across the world. Social factors play the largest role in shaping the overall health of communities. For example, the ability to access healthcare, a safe living environment, racial equity, nutritious food, quality education, and supportive relationships free of discrimination are all incredibly important to your overall health.

People who face health disparities are often disproportionately affected by diabetes. In the U.S., certain racial and ethnic groups and groups with lower socioeconomic status experience a higher risk of diabetes and have higher rates of illness and death from the disease.

Did You Know?

- Non-Hispanic blacks are twice as likely as non-Hispanic whites to die from diabetes. ([source](#))
- Black men and women have a 60% higher rate of being diagnosed with diabetes than that of white people. ([source](#))
- The rate of diabetes can vary by race and ethnicity: ([source](#))
 - American Indians and Pacific Islanders have the highest rates of diabetes among the five racial groups counted in the U.S. Census.
 - Diabetes is more common among African Americans and Asian Americans compared to white people.
 - Hispanics living in the U.S. are 17% more likely to have type 2 diabetes than non-Hispanic white people.
 - Asian Indians are 2-3 times as likely to get diabetes as Korean Americans are.

For more information, please visit:

- [American Diabetes Association](#)
- [Type 2 Diabetes Risk Test](#)
- [Diabetes Meal Planning](#)
- [Diabetes Care Schedule](#)
- [Ten Surprising Things That Can Spike Your Blood Sugar](#)
- [Diabetes Medical Management Plan](#)

Activity 1: Move with a Doc

Join Dr. Shah as she talks about type 2 diabetes—what is diabetes, insulin resistance, signs and symptoms, risk factors, and prevention.

[Watch Now](#)

Activity 2: Types of Diabetes

Test your knowledge of the different types of diabetes. For each statement, select the type of diabetes that applies. (Hint: The statement may apply to more than one type.) [The answer key is on page 5.](#)

	Pre-Diabetes	Type 1 Diabetes	Type 2 Diabetes	Gestational Diabetes
1. Occurs when cells in the body fail to respond to insulin. Over time, the disease progresses, and the body produces less and less insulin.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Develops during pregnancy in women who often have no history of diabetes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Symptoms often take years to develop, and sometimes there are no symptoms at all.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Autoimmune condition when the body fails to produce insulin.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. A1C test results between 5.7-6.4% or a fasting blood sugar level of 100-125mg/dL.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Usually goes away after the baby is born. However, women and their children are at greater risk for diabetes later in life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Can be prevented or delayed through lifestyle changes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Often has no symptoms and is discovered through a blood glucose test.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Often begins during childhood or adolescence.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. An A1C test result of 6.5% or higher or a fasting blood sugar level of 126 mg/dL or higher.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. A condition that increases the risk of developing type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and stroke.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Risk factors include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overweight • 45 years or older • Physically active less than 3x per week • Family history of type 2 diabetes • African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, American Indians, Pacific Islanders, and some Asian Americans are at higher risk. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Talk with your health care provider about ways to prevent or control diabetes. Connecting with the right care team is the first step to effectively managing diabetes. There's no one-size-fits-all treatment; managing your health depends on the type of diabetes you have. Some individuals can control their blood glucose levels by eating healthy and exercising, while others may need medication or insulin.

Activity 3: The Role of Carbohydrates

Your body needs carbohydrates (carbs) to help preserve muscle and to give you the energy you need for your daily mental and physical tasks, but carefully choosing which ones to consume can help to prevent diabetes or aid in managing diabetes. When you hear carbs, you likely think of baked goods (e.g., pies, cakes, cookies), white bread, and pasta. But did you know that there are different types of carbs, some of which are naturally occurring? You can find carbs in whole fruits and vegetables, while others are processed and refined, meaning they lack or have been stripped of nutrients.

The three types of carbs are:











- **Sugars or simple carbs:** Natural sugars found in fruit and milk, or the added sugars found in soda and other packaged foods.
- **Starches or complex carbs:** Includes wheat, oats, and other grains; starchy vegetables such as corn and potatoes; and dried beans, lentils, and peas.
- **Fiber:** The part of plant foods that's not digested, but helps you stay healthy.

More about carbohydrates:

- Sugars and starches raise blood sugar, but fiber doesn't—it doesn't get broken down into glucose.
- Carbs are measured in grams. One serving is about 15 grams of carbs—this isn't always the same as what you think of as a serving of food. For example, most people would count a small baked potato as one serving, but at about 30g of carbs, it counts as two carb servings. (Source: [CDC](#))

Guessing Game:

Which of the following foods contain **zero** carbohydrates? Check the box next to each item below that you think is a zero-carb item. [The answer key is on page 6.](#)

 <input type="checkbox"/> Cashews	 <input type="checkbox"/> Goat cheese	 <input type="checkbox"/> Sugar-free ice cream	 <input type="checkbox"/> Chickpeas	 <input type="checkbox"/> Beets
 <input type="checkbox"/> Balsamic vinegar	 <input type="checkbox"/> Low-carb tortilla wraps	 <input type="checkbox"/> Spaghetti sauce	 <input type="checkbox"/> Fat-free ranch dressing	 <input type="checkbox"/> Olive oil

Answer Keys

Activity 2: Types of Diabetes – Answer Key

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Activity 3: Guessing Game – Answer Key

Olive oil and **goat cheese**—these are the only two items on the list that contain zero carbohydrates.

This activity shows you that many everyday foods on the market contain hidden carbs. During processing, sugars are added to many foods (**added sugars = added carbs**). Also, foods like beans (e.g., chickpeas), root vegetables (e.g., beets), and nuts (e.g., cashews), while all considered healthy, contain carbs or higher amounts of carbs than their counterparts. If you're trying to lower your carb count, it's good to be mindful of what you're eating.

Examples:

- Cashews have nine grams of carbs per ounce, almonds have six, and pecans have under four.
- Protein-rich beans (e.g., black beans, chickpeas) are in the same category as beef, chicken, and eggs, which tricks you into thinking they're low-carb. A ¼-cup of chickpeas has 30 grams of carbs.
- Most people think carb-free when it comes to vegetables, but starchy root veggies (e.g., beets, carrots) are an exception. Beets have about 13 grams of carbs per cup.

Remember:

- If you have diabetes, talk with your doctor to create an eating plan that's right for you. There's no one-size-fits-all diabetes treatment. Some people can control their blood glucose levels by eating healthy and exercising, while others may need medication or insulin.
- Just because a food or drink contains carbs doesn't mean it's bad for you. When shopping for food, look at the total carbs, sugars, and ingredients on the Nutrition Facts label. Using the label can help you compare items and make healthier choices. For help understanding the Nutrition Facts label, refer to activity two in March's [National Nutrition Month Preventive Health Toolkit](#).

Resources

Learn more about diabetes prevention and living with diabetes with these SSM Health and community resources:

SSM Health resources:

- [Diabetes](#)
- [Nutrition Services](#)
- [Diabetes Self-Management Services](#)

Community resources:

- [CDC: Diabetes](#)
- [CDC: Prevent Type 2 Diabetes](#)
- [American Diabetes Association](#)