

Diabetes

Insulin is a hormone produced in the body's pancreas that is needed to convert sugar, starches, and other food into necessary energy for the body. Diabetes is the disease caused by the body not producing or using insulin.

In the United States alone, nearly 18.2 million people have diabetes. Approximately 5.2 million of them have not yet been diagnosed.

The two most common forms of diabetes are:

Type I: when the body fails to produce insulin

Type II: results from insulin resistance, combined with relative insulin deficiency (also known as "juvenile diabetes"). It is most common among those who have been diagnosed with diabetes.

Although Types I and II are the most common forms of diabetes, there are other types. One of those is gestational diabetes. Gestational diabetes affects almost 4 % of pregnant women each year in the United States (about 135,000).

Pre-diabetes is also becoming a growing problem. Prediabetes is when blood sugar is above normal but not high enough to be diagnosed as Type II. Almost 41 million people have prediabetes. Some long-term damage to the body, especially the heart and circulatory system, may already be occurring during pre-diabetes. Managing your blood glucose by changing diet and exercise when you have pre-diabetes can delay or prevent Type II diabetes from ever developing.

Symptoms for Diabetes include:

- ▶ Frequent urination
- ▶ Excessive thirst
- ▶ Extreme hunger
- ▶ Unusual weight loss
- ▶ Increased fatigue
- ▶ Irritability
- ▶ Blurry vision

There is no cure for diabetes. The only treatment is to inject insulin into the body. Injections can be through an insulin pump, with an insulin pen, or with a syringe. Injections are usually made into the upper arm, upper leg, buttocks, abdomen, or hip area.

This information is general. If your doctor tells you something different, follow his or her instructions.

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