

HealthMatters



Controlling Your Weight is Key to Avoiding Diabetes

In people with diabetes, the body does not produce or properly use insulin — a hormone that is needed to convert sugar starches and other food into the energy we need to live. Nearly 24 million adults and children in the U.S. have been diagnosed with the disease. Another 79 million Americans have pre-diabetes, where blood glucose levels are higher than normal, suggesting that a diagnosis of Type 2 diabetes might be next.

Diabetes is the leading cause of new cases of blindness among adults ages 20-74. It's the leading cause of kidney failure. And people diagnosed with diabetes average medical costs 2.3 times higher than those of people without the disease.

These facts may sound alarming, but by managing your weight you could avoid this disease. Especially in the case of Type 2 diabetes, a major contributor is obesity. Losing weight dramatically decreases the chances you'll develop the disease, and it will improve the quality of your life in the process.

Even a modest loss can make a difference. Studies show that overweight people who lose as little as 10-15 pounds and exercise just 30 minutes a day, 5 times a week, reduced their risk of developing diabetes by almost 60%. With that weight loss, your blood pressure and cholesterol levels would most likely improve, and the likelihood of your suffering a heart attack or stroke would probably be reduced as well.

Warning Signs and Symptoms of Diabetes

- ▶ Unusual thirst
- ▶ Frequent desire to urinate
- ▶ Blurred vision
- ▶ Unexplained fatigue
- ▶ Extreme hunger
- ▶ Irritability
- ▶ Tingling/numbness in the hands or feet

If you experience any of the above, call your doctor and ask to be tested for diabetes. Don't just live longer, live better.

Did You Know?

- ▶ **Best Doctors is a free and confidential service offered by your employer**
- ▶ **The Best Doctors service is offered over the phone**
- ▶ **Over 2 million people are covered under Best Doctors**

If you have
questions call
1-866-904-0910.