

Healthy Blood Sugar

The cells in our body use sugar for energy. Insulin is a hormone that helps move sugar from our blood into cells. We usually make enough insulin to match the amount of sugar in our blood.

Diabetes is when the body doesn't make enough (or any) insulin, or when the body cannot use the insulin it makes. Sugar then stays in the blood and doesn't get to the cells. **Insulin resistance** is when the body does not respond to insulin and may occur before diabetes is diagnosed.

- **Blood glucose** (or blood sugar) is the amount of sugar in the blood at one point in time.
- **Hemoglobin A1C** (A1C) is the average blood glucose level over the past 2-3 months.

**29.1
MILLION**

DIABETES

29.1 million people have diabetes. That's one out of every 11 people.



1 OUT OF 4 DO NOT KNOW THEY HAVE DIABETES

**86
MILLION**

PREDIABETES

86 million people – more than 1 out of 3 adults – have prediabetes



9 OUT OF 10 DO NOT KNOW THEY HAVE PREDIABETES

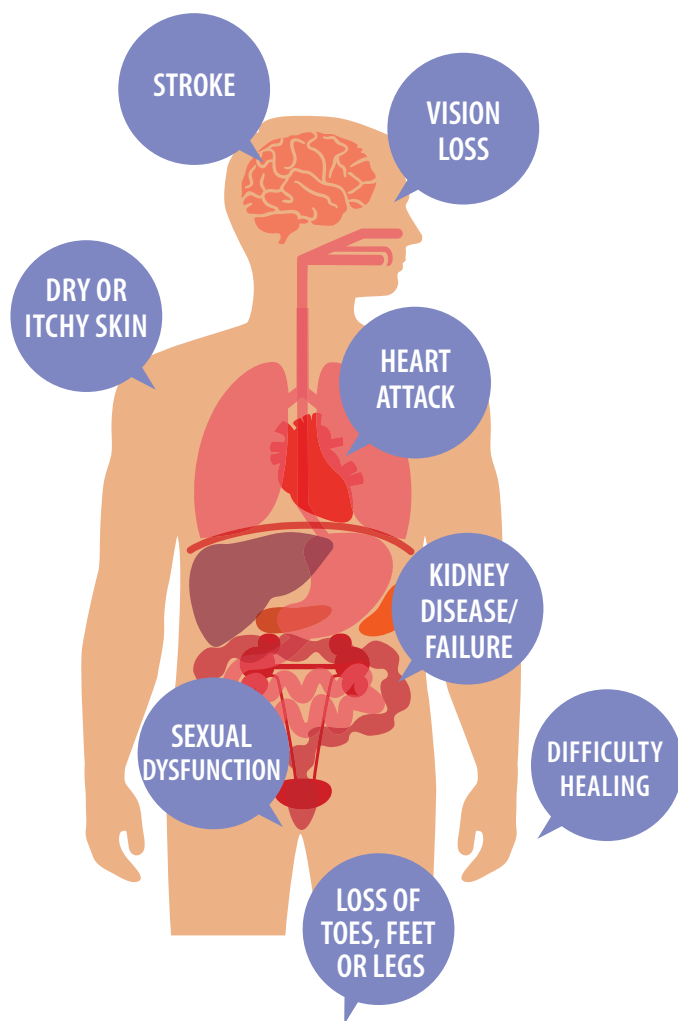
Prediabetes is when blood sugar levels are in between normal and diabetes.

- Most people with prediabetes develop diabetes within 10 years.
- Prediabetes raises the risk of a heart attack or stroke by 50%.
- Weight loss and exercise can help prevent prediabetes from becoming diabetes.

Know Your Numbers

Category	Fasting Glucose	A1C	Non-fasting Glucose
Healthy Range	Below 100	Below 5.7%	Below 140
Prediabetes	100 – 125	5.7-6.4%	140-199
Diabetes	126 and above	6.5% and above	200 and above

High blood sugar can damage nerves and blood vessels and cause:



Read more about diabetes at www.diabetes.org.

Registered dietitians (RD) and certified diabetes educators (CDE) are both great sources to help you eat healthier, lower blood sugar, and manage diabetes.

For information on the WakeMed Diabetes Management Program, call 919-350-7292. To schedule an appointment with an RD, call 919-350-7000, option 4.

What can affect blood sugar?



Things we can change

- Be active at least 30 minutes five days a week.
- Eat healthy foods and reduce portions.
- Lose weight: start with 3-5% weight loss.
- Improve cholesterol, triglycerides, and blood pressure.
- Avoid tobacco use to protect blood vessels.

Things we cannot change

- Family history
- Race
- Age
- History of gestational diabetes (diabetes while pregnant)

Myths about diabetes

Myth: Eating too much sugar causes diabetes.

Fact: The answer is not so simple. Type 1 diabetes is caused by genetics and unknown factors; type 2 diabetes is caused by genetics and lifestyle factors. Having extra weight does increase your risk for developing type 2 diabetes. A diet high in calories from any source, including sugar, contributes to weight gain. Sugary drinks have been linked to developing type 2 diabetes.

Myth: People with diabetes should eat special foods.

Fact: Healthy eating for people with diabetes is generally the same as healthy eating for anyone. "Diabetic" foods don't usually have a special benefit. Most of them still raise blood sugar, usually cost more money, and may even cause diarrhea if they contain sugar alcohols.

Myth: If you have diabetes, you should not eat carbohydrates.

Fact: Carbohydrates are part of a healthy eating pattern. Fruits, whole grains, beans, milk, yogurt, and starchy vegetables like potatoes and peas can be included in meals and snacks. As with many foods, it is important to be aware of portion sizes of carbohydrate-rich foods.