



## Gestational Diabetes: What to Do after Delivery

Women who have had gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM) are at a greater risk for developing GDM during subsequent pregnancies or type 2 diabetes later in life. Women with a history of GDM should be screened for diabetes during the six- to 12-week postpartum period and screened yearly, thereafter.

Anyone who has had GDM should have a two-hour glucose tolerance test or a fasting blood sugar test.

Normal values for the two-hour test are **less than 140**. For the fasting test, normal values are **less than 100**.

If your test indicates above normal values, you should see a medical doctor for follow-up.

### Preventing type 2 diabetes

As many as 50 percent of women who have gestational diabetes will develop type 2 diabetes. To help prevent developing this disease, it's important to have good nutritional habits, be physically active, and maintain a healthy weight.

Here are some goals for diabetes prevention:

- Maintain normal blood glucose levels
- Achieve optimal blood cholesterol levels
- Maintain desirable weight through diet and exercise
- Improve overall health through nutrition

### Signs & symptoms of diabetes

- Increased thirst/urination
- Feeling fatigued
- Blurred vision
- Slow healing cuts/wounds
- Frequent vaginal infections
- Dry itchy skin

### Healthy eating tips

- Eat a variety of foods
- Eat a moderate amount of all foods
- Balance protein, fat and carbohydrates
- Consume smaller servings of calorie-dense foods and beverages such as:
  - Foods with high-fat or high-sugar content
  - Meat, cheeses and most dairy products
  - Alcohol

*Continued→*

## **Benefits of physical activity**

- Increases insulin function
- Helps maintain normal blood glucose
- Lowers blood pressure
- Improves circulation
- Reduces stress
- Helps maintain healthy weight or promotes weight loss

## **Suggested types of physical activity**

- Walking and/or jogging
- Swimming
- Cycling
- Yard work
- Housework

## **Future Pregnancies**

- Have your blood sugar checked to see if it is normal before you get pregnant again.
- Notify your doctor at your first visit that you had diabetes with your first pregnancy.