

# PREVENT DIABETES

*Diabetes may run in your family, but you can avoid or delay its development.*

You can reduce your risk for type 2 diabetes by eating a healthy diet, getting plenty of physical activity, and losing excess weight, according to *NIH in Health*. Type 2 diabetes occurs due to problems related to a hormone called insulin. When your body digests food, it's broken down and converted to glucose and other molecules, which then travel through the bloodstream. Insulin signals cells to let glucose in for use as an energy source.

In a person with type 2 diabetes, either the body's cells have trouble using insulin or the body isn't making enough insulin. As a result, glucose can build up to harmful levels in the blood. That's why people with diabetes often have high blood glucose levels.

These high levels raise your risk for heart disease, kidney problems, blindness, amputations, and other serious conditions.

Being overweight, obese, or inactive increases the risk to develop type 2 diabetes. You can change these risk factors. Losing just 5-10 percent of your weight and exercising 30 minutes a day on 5 days a week goes a long way to lower your risk.



## STEPS TO PREVENT DIABETES

- Move more. It doesn't matter what activity you do, as long as you enjoy it. 
- Choose healthy foods. Eat fiber-rich fruits and vegetables.
- Maintain a healthy weight. With healthy eating and physical activity, you can drop pounds and keep them off.
- Set reasonable goals. Start with small changes, even walking 15 minutes a day. Add 5 minutes per day next week and so on. Goal: 30 minutes, 5 days a week.
- Record your progress. Keep a diary of what you eat and drink and the number of minutes you exercise to stay focused on your goal.
- Keep at it. Making even small changes is hard in the beginning. If you get off track, start again.