



# Diabetes

What you don't know CAN hurt you!

## What is diabetes?

Diabetes develops when your body can't make or properly use insulin. Insulin is a hormone that helps your cells use sugar from your blood for energy. If there isn't enough insulin, or it isn't working properly, blood sugar levels get too high.

More people are getting type 2 diabetes, the most common form of diabetes. In type 2 diabetes, your body makes insulin, but the insulin doesn't work very well. A healthy diet, exercise and keeping a normal weight all help insulin do its job. But if you become overweight and inactive, insulin doesn't work as well, even when your body makes extra amounts of it.

## What happens if I ignore diabetes?

- It increases your chance of having a heart attack or stroke because arteries harden more quickly.
- It can cause diabetic eye disease, or retinopathy, and lead to blindness.
- Infections can lead to amputations, especially the lose of a foot.
- It can damage nerves throughout the body, and lead to numbness or pain in the hands, arms, feet and legs.
- It can lead to kidney disease and failure.

## What are the most common symptoms of diabetes?

- Urinating a lot
- Feeling thirsty often
- Losing weight without trying
- Feeling hungry a lot
- Having blurry vision
- Feeling tired

## How do I prevent type 2 diabetes?

- Know how to eat right
- Keep your weight at a healthy level
- Get enough physical activity

If you already have diabetes, these same actions help control it.

If you think you have diabetes,  
see your doctor soon. Your  
future depends on it!

