



## WELLNESS AT WORK

### Prevention 101

#### Diabetes Prevention and Care

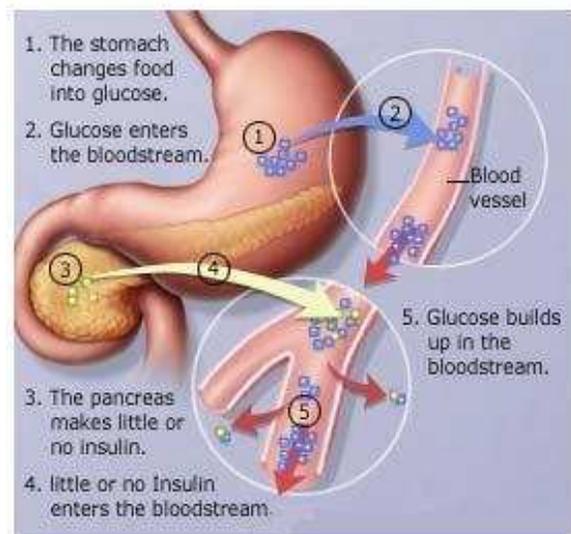
Diabetes is the biggest public health crisis of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and it continues to grow at epidemic proportions. Having diabetes places a person at increased risk for a number of serious complications, including heart disease, blindness, kidney disease and amputations.

Nearly 25% of people who have diabetes don't even know it, so it's important to know if you are at increased risk for developing the disease. Risk factors include:

1. a family history of diabetes
2. developing diabetes during pregnancy
3. having high blood pressure
4. being over age 45
5. being overweight
6. being physically inactive
7. a race or ethnicity of African American, Latino, Native American, Asian American or Pacific Islander

### **AFFLICTIONS OF DIABETES**

- Life expectancy is shortened by 5 to 10 years or more
- It contributes to 160,000 deaths each year
- Two to twelve times the risk for heart disease
- Two to four times the risk of stroke
- Number one cause of blindness in adults with 12,000 to 24,000 new cases annually
- A factor in half of all foot and leg amputations
- Over 60,000 amputations yearly in diabetics
- In any given year, over 50,000 diabetics are either on dialysis, or have had a kidney transplant (due to diabetic nephropathy)
- Cause of peripheral neuropathy
- Increased risk of breast and uterine cancers



Individuals may go many years without apparent symptoms of diabetes, since they may be similar to symptoms for other conditions. Don't assume that a lack of symptoms/signs means that everything is okay.

Warning signs may include:

1. Frequent urination
2. Increased thirst
3. Increased hunger (especially after eating)
4. Fatigue
5. Unusual weight gain or loss
6. Blurred vision
7. Dry mouth
8. Headaches
9. Slow-healing sores or cuts
10. Bleeding and sore gums

If you feel that you may be experiencing any of these symptoms, consult your health care provider as soon as possible.

Taking the steps to make healthy lifestyle choices can impact your health and well-being now and in the future. Whether you have diabetes or want to prevent it, simple lifestyle changes can help you stay healthy. Strive to:

- Increase your activity level. Walking 30 minutes a day can help stall the onset of diabetes.
- Eat a healthy diet that is low in fat and rich in fruits and vegetables.
- Reduce your portion sizes and work on eating regular, balanced meals. Lose weight if you're overweight. Losing just 5 to 10% of body weight can prevent or delay diabetes (if you weigh 200 pounds, that's only 10 to 20 pounds).



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