

### Treatment of type 1 diabetes:

Lack of insulin production by the pancreas makes it necessary for people with type 1 diabetes to take insulin injections daily. In addition, treatment includes a special meal plan, planned physical activity, and home blood glucose testing several times a day.



### Treatment of type 2 diabetes:

Treatment typically includes meal planning, physical activity, home blood glucose testing, and in some cases, diabetes pills and/or insulin. Approximately 40% of people with type 2 diabetes require insulin injections.

### Can Diabetes Be Prevented?

A number of studies have shown that regular physical activity can greatly reduce the risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Researchers are making progress in identifying the exact genetics and “triggers” that predispose some individuals to develop type 1 diabetes, but prevention, as well as a cure, remains a question.

If you are concerned that you or someone you love has symptoms of diabetes, see your doctor to have a simple blood test. Early detection prevents problems later. Strive for balance. It is the key to preventing problems from diabetes.



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# What is diabetes?



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South Dakota Department of Health  
Diabetes Prevention and Control Program

# What Is Diabetes?

Most of the food we eat is turned into glucose (sugar) for our bodies to use for energy. The pancreas, an organ that lies near the stomach, makes a hormone called insulin to help glucose get into the cells of our bodies. When you have diabetes, your body either doesn't make enough insulin or can't use its own insulin as well as it should. This causes glucose to build up in your blood.



Diabetes can cause serious health problems including heart disease, blindness, kidney failure, and lower-extremity amputations. Diabetes is the eighth leading cause of death in South Dakota.

## What Are The Symptoms Of Diabetes?

People who think they might have diabetes must visit a doctor for diagnosis. They might have SOME or NONE of the following symptoms:

- Frequent urination
- Excessive thirst
- Unexplained weight loss
- Extreme hunger
- Vision changes
- Tingling or numbness in hands or feet
- Feeling very tired much of the time
- Very dry skin
- Sores that are slow to heal
- More infections than usual

Nausea, vomiting, or stomach pains may accompany in the abrupt onset of insulin-dependent diabetes, now called type 1 diabetes.

## What Are The Types And Risk Factors Of Diabetes?

**Type 1 diabetes** may account for 5-10% of all cases of diabetes. Risk factors include genetics (family history), autoimmune, and environmental factors.

**Type 2 diabetes** may account for about 90% to 95% cases of diabetes. Risk factors include being older than 45 years of age, obesity, family history of diabetes, prior history of gestational diabetes (diabetes while pregnant), physical inactivity, and race/ethnicity. American Indians, African Americans, Hispanic/Latino Americans, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islanders are at increased risk for type 2 diabetes.

**Gestational diabetes** develops in 2% to 5% of all pregnancies but usually goes away when a pregnancy is over. Gestational diabetes occurs more frequently in American Indians, Hispanic/Latino Americans, African Americans, and people with a family history of diabetes. Obesity is also associated with higher risk. Women who have had gestational diabetes are at increased risk for developing type 2 diabetes later in life. Healthy eating, exercising, and reaching and maintaining a healthy weight reduces the risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

## What Is The Treatment For Diabetes?

Treatment is aimed at keeping blood glucose near normal levels. Education on self-management is key to the treatment of diabetes. Treatment must be personalized and must address medical, psychosocial, and lifestyle issues.