



# Diabetes Awareness Day

Education and Screenings Hosted and Sponsored by  
the Greater Mercer Public Health Partnership

## No registration required.

The Greater Mercer Public Health Partnership will sponsor its first-ever Diabetes Awareness Day, a coordinated effort to raise community awareness by providing diabetes education and screenings at five locations throughout Mercer and Middlesex counties

This program is being presented in response to feedback we received from area residents who responded to our recent community needs assessment. We learned that many people want and need to know more about the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diabetes. Bring the whole family to this fun, educational and invaluable community health day to learn about pre-diabetes, diabetes, nutrition and exercise and to have a free blood glucose screening.

**GMPHP** Greater Mercer  
Public Health  
Partnership

## Wednesday, November 6

Join us from **7 to 9 a.m.**, **2 to 4 p.m.**, or **6 to 8 p.m.** at any of these locations:

### Local Health Departments of Mercer County

Quaker Bridge Mall  
150 Quakerbridge Mall, Lawrenceville

### Capital Health Medical Center – Hopewell

One Capital Way, Pennington

### RWJ Fitness & Wellness Center

3100 Quakerbridge Road, Mercerville

### St. Lawrence Rehabilitation Center

2381 Lawrenceville Road, Lawrenceville

### University Medical Center of Princeton at Plainsboro

One Plainsboro Road, Plainsboro

*The Greater Mercer Public Health Partnership (GMPHP) is a collaboration of hospitals, local and county health departments and other not-for-profit organizations whose mission is to measurably improve the health of residents of Mercer and Middlesex counties.*

For more information, please email [GMPHP.NJ@gmail.com](mailto:GMPHP.NJ@gmail.com)

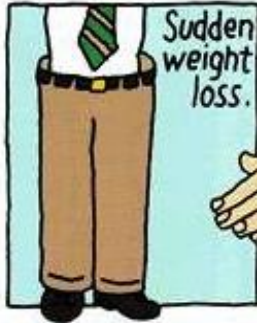
# DIABETES

## KNOW THE SYMPTOMS



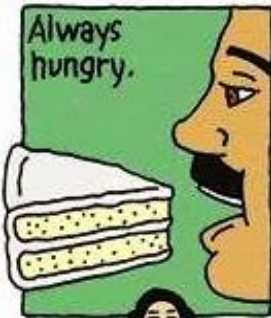
**DIABETES** develops when the pancreas does not make enough insulin, or the insulin it does make can't be properly used. As a result, high levels of sugar (glucose) remain in the bloodstream.

- 25.8 million Americans have diabetes
- 7.0 million of them do not know they have diabetes
- 79 million people have prediabetes, when blood glucose levels are higher than normal but not yet high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes



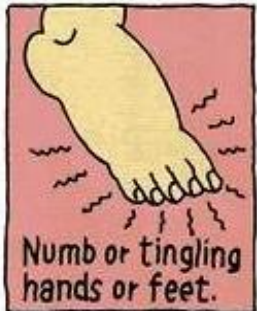
**Diabetes cannot be cured ... but it can be controlled**

Find out if you are at risk. Diabetes is more common in African Americans, Latinos, Native Americans, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. Being an older adult, having a family history of diabetes or giving birth to a baby weighing more than 9 pounds are all **uncontrollable** risk factors that can't be changed.



You can lower your **controllable** risk factors! While not everyone with type 2 diabetes is overweight, obesity and lack of physical activity are two of the most common causes of this type of diabetes.

- **Lose a little weight.** The weight you think is normal for you may not be a healthy weight. You can prevent or delay type 2 diabetes by losing as little as 10 pounds.
- **Make healthy food choices.** Choose more fruits, vegetables, fish, lean meats, whole grains, and low fat dairy products. Eat fewer fatty and fried foods. Serve smaller portions. Drink more water.
- **Exercise.** Choose an activity you enjoy ... then do it! Try to be active for 30 minutes a day on most days of the week to help you lose weight and stay healthy.

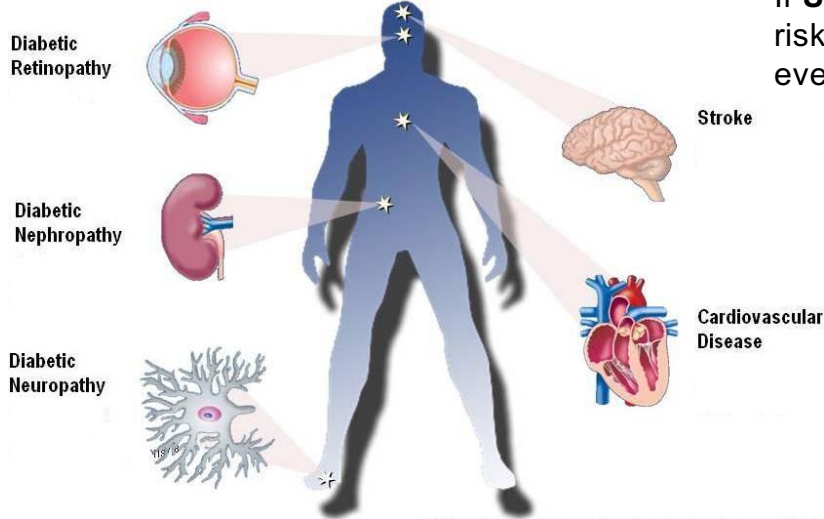


**Type 1 diabetes** is usually diagnosed in children and young adults. In type 1 diabetes, the body does not produce insulin. Symptoms usually appear suddenly, a signal that there is a problem that needs to be addressed.

**Type 2 diabetes** (the most common type of diabetes) usually develops in adulthood and often comes on so gradually that there may be no symptoms or symptoms may not even be recognized.

While people can live for months, even years, without knowing they have diabetes, the disease can still do damage. Ask your health care provider about simple screening tests for diabetes.

# COMPLICATIONS OF UNCONTROLLED DIABETES



If **UNCONTROLLED**, diabetes can put you at risk for complications that can affect nearly every organ in the body.

- **Cardiovascular disease.** Uncontrolled diabetes increases the risk of death from heart disease and stroke. If you have diabetes, you are at least twice as likely as other people to have heart disease or a stroke. Diabetes can also cause poor blood flow in the legs and feet (peripheral artery disease) causing leg cramps, changes in skin color, decreased sensation and slower wound healing.
- **Eye damage.** Uncontrolled diabetes can cause eye problems, including glaucoma, cataracts and diabetic retinopathy (damage to the retina of the eye). It is the leading cause of new blindness in adults ages 20-74.
- **Kidney damage.** Uncontrolled diabetes is the leading cause of kidney failure in adults. Unfortunately, there are no warning symptoms if you have early diabetes-related kidney disease. Swelling of the legs and feet only occur in more advanced stages of kidney failure.
- **Nerve damage.** Over time, high blood sugar levels can harm the nerves (neuropathy). This can lead to loss of sensation or feeling, usually starting in the toes, or pain and burning of the feet. Diabetes-related nerve damage can also cause pain in the legs, arms and hands, and can cause problems with digestion, bladder control and sexual function.
- **Gum disease.** Uncontrolled diabetes increases the risk of developing severe gum disease. Diabetes slows circulation, which can also make the gum tissues more susceptible to infections and reduces the body's resistance to infection. High glucose levels in saliva can promote growth of bacteria that cause gum disease.
- **Amputation.** Impaired circulation and nerve damage contribute to the poor healing of foot sores and ulcers or injury to the bone or connective tissue in the lower extremities. More than 60 percent of non-traumatic (non-injury) lower limb amputations occur in people with diabetes. Amputation is a last-resort treatment for those with injuries and infections that have been left untreated, or for those who have ignored severe signs of diabetic neuropathy.

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***Diabetes cannot be cured ... but it can be controlled***

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**WEST WINDSOR HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

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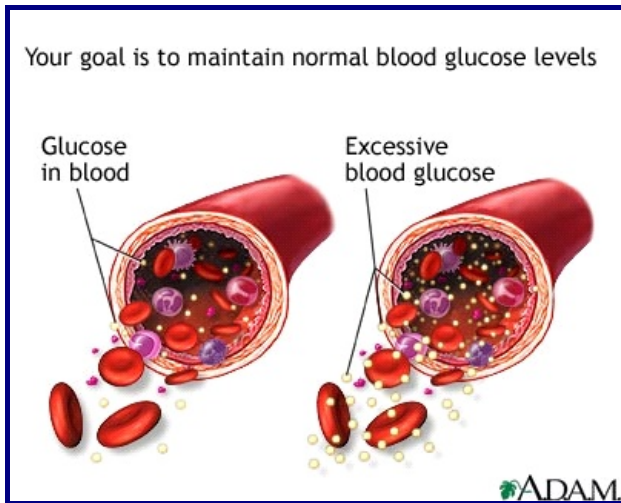
[www.westwindsornj.org](http://www.westwindsornj.org) ■ 609.936.8400

# DIABETES MYTHS

Adapted from National Diabetes Education Program

**Since there is no diabetes in my family, I'm not at risk for developing diabetes.**

Diabetes does run in families, but many people diagnosed with the disease have no close family members who have it. Lifestyle choices, heredity, and possibly other factors such as certain viruses, may increase risk for the disease.



**It's called sugar diabetes, so it must come from the sugar I eat.**

When you eat food, your body turns it into a form of energy called glucose, also known as "blood sugar." Glucose is not the same as the refined sugar that you buy in stores. Insulin is made in the pancreas and helps move the blood glucose into the body's cells for energy. When the body's own insulin does not work well or when not enough is made, the blood glucose level rises. Then the person has diabetes.

**I'll know that I have diabetes by my symptoms.**

A person with type 1 diabetes, usually seen in children and young adults, will have obvious symptoms. They produce no insulin, the hormone that controls the blood glucose level. The majority of diabetics have type 2 diabetes. Type 2 diabetes usually develops in adulthood and may have few or no symptoms. If you have type 2 diabetes your body does not use insulin properly. This is called insulin resistance. At first, your pancreas makes extra insulin to make up for it. But over time your pancreas can't make enough insulin to keep your blood glucose at normal levels. Only a blood test can tell for sure if someone has diabetes.

**My doctor says I have borderline diabetes. Since I have just "a touch of sugar" I don't have to worry.**

There is no such thing as borderline diabetes. To many people, "borderline" means they don't really have the disease, so they don't have to make any changes to control it. This is wrong. If you have diabetes, you have diabetes. Diabetes must be treated and taken seriously.

**By drinking water, I can wash away the extra sugar in my blood and cure my diabetes.**

Although you can wash away sugar spilled on a table, you cannot wash away a high blood glucose level by drinking water. However, you can **control** your diabetes by eating healthy food, being physically active, controlling your weight, seeing your health care provider regularly, taking prescribed medications and monitoring your blood glucose.

**Insulin is a cure for diabetes.**

Insulin and oral medications are not a cure for diabetes. At this point, there is no cure - there are only medicine and behaviors that can control diabetes. Insulin helps to control diabetes by keeping the blood glucose from rising.

## My friend takes insulin pills to control her diabetes.

Insulin is a protein; it cannot be taken by mouth because the stomach would not digest it. Insulin must be given by injection or insulin pump through the skin. Diabetes pills are medicines that help the body produce more insulin, use its own insulin better, produce less blood glucose from the liver or limit carbohydrate absorption after a meal.

## If I don't take diabetes medicine, my diabetes must not be serious.

Not everyone who has diabetes takes diabetes medicine. If the body produces some insulin, weight loss, healthy eating habits and regular physical activity can help insulin work more effectively. However, diabetes can change over time and diabetes medicine may be needed later.



## If I have diabetes, I can never eat any sweets, chocolate or starchy foods.

Starchy foods are part of a healthy meal plan. What is important is the portion size. Whole grain breads, cereals, pasta, rice and starchy vegetables like potatoes, yams, peas and corn can be included in your meals and snacks. If eaten as part of a healthy meal plan or combined with exercise, sweets and desserts can be eaten by people with diabetes. Too much sugar is bad for everyone as it provides only empty calories.

## I have diabetes, and I've seen its effect on my family members. I know there is nothing I can do about its effect on MY body.

While there is no cure for diabetes, it is **CONTROLLABLE**. There are many things people with diabetes can do to live a full life, while preventing or delaying complications. You can control your diabetes by eating healthy foods, staying active, losing weight if needed, taking medicine as prescribed, testing your blood glucose and seeing your health care provider.

### DIABETES INFORMATION

#### American Diabetes Association

[www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org)  
800-DIABETES (800-342-2383)

#### CDC - Centers for Disease Control

[www.cdc.gov/diabetes/consumer/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/consumer/index.htm)  
800-232-4636

#### National Diabetes Education Program

[www.ndep.nih.gov](http://www.ndep.nih.gov) ■ 800-438-5383

#### Mayo Clinic

[www.mayoclinic.com/health/diabetes/DS01121](http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/diabetes/DS01121)

#### Learning About Diabetes (easy-to-read resources)

[www.learningaboutdiabetes.org](http://www.learningaboutdiabetes.org)

**WebMD** ■ <http://diabetes.webmd.com>

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