

TYPE 2 DIABETES

PATIENT/FAMILY INFORMATION SHEET

What is type 2 diabetes?

Type 2 diabetes is a disease in which the amount of sugar (glucose) in the blood is higher than normal. It is one of the most common chronic diseases in the United States.

What causes type 2 diabetes?

It is thought that type 2 diabetes takes many years to develop. High blood glucose (sugar) is actually a late indicator of type 2 diabetes. The key changes in the body appear to be:

- Increased weight/fat around the waist
- Increased sugar production by the liver
- Increased resistance to the action of the body's own insulin
- Gradual decrease in insulin production over time

Who is at risk of developing type 2 diabetes?

Family history as well as lifestyle can increase the risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Typical profiles for individuals at risk are:

- Age – risk increases with age but may occur in childhood if obesity is present
- Ethnic groups - African American, Hispanic American, American Indian, Asian American and Pacific Islander
- Family history – family member with diabetes
- Overweight – especially around the waist
- Gestational history - women having given birth to a baby weighing more than 9 pounds or who have had gestational diabetes
- Polycystic ovary syndrome

What are the common symptoms of type 2 diabetes?

Article I. Common symptoms of type 2 diabetes may include the following:

- increased thirst
- unexplained weight loss
- frequent infections
- problems with sexual function
- numbness or tingling in hands and feet
- increased urination
- increased hunger
- blurred vision
- dry, itchy skin

Some individuals with diabetes have no symptoms at all.

How do I know if I have type 2 diabetes?

Your doctor must make the diagnosis of type 2 diabetes. The diagnosis of type 2 diabetes is made if:

- ✓ glycohemoglobin (also called A1c) is equal to or more than 6.5%
- OR**
- ✓ fasting blood glucose is equal to or more than 126 mg/dl after fasting overnight (at least 8 hours)
- OR**
- ✓ during a glucose tolerance test the blood glucose is equal to or greater than 200 mg/dl 2 hours into the test
- OR**
- ✓ blood glucose at any time in the day is equal to or more than 200 mg/dl and there are symptoms of high blood glucose, such as extreme thirst, increased frequency of urination, weight loss without dieting, fatigue.

If your blood glucose test result is higher than normal, your doctor will ask you to repeat the blood test in a couple of weeks. If the repeat test is again higher than normal, the diagnosis of type 2 diabetes is made.

How can I control my blood sugar if I have type 2 diabetes?

Controlling blood glucose involves three “tools”:

- good food choices
- physical activity
- medication (if necessary)

In addition, adequate sleep or 7 to 9 hours each night is an important part of diabetes care.

Your healthcare team can help you develop a plan for controlling your blood glucose.

Where can I learn more about type 2 diabetes?

If you have questions you may contact your physician or any of the following resources:

Organization	Phone
Greenwich Hospital Weight Loss and Diabetes Center	203.863.2939
Greenwich Hospital Diabetes Education Specialist	203.863.3929
American Diabetes Association	800.232.3472
Web Resources	
<input type="checkbox"/> American Diabetes Association: www.diabetes.org	

For more Patient Education Fact Sheets, see the Greenwich Hospital web site at www.greenwichhospital.org and click on Patient Education