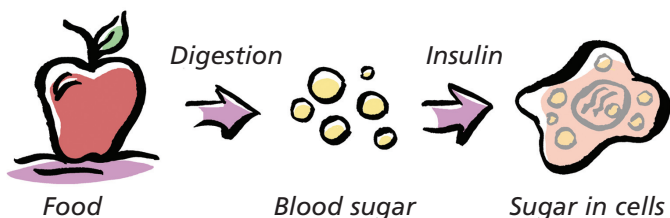


# What is diabetes?

Diabetes is a condition in which sugar levels in your blood are high. When you eat, some of your food is broken down into sugar (also called glucose). Sugar travels in your blood to all your body's cells. Insulin helps sugar move from your blood into your cells. Insulin is a hormone which is made by the beta cells in your pancreas.

Your cells need sugar for energy. Sugar from food makes your blood sugar levels go up. Insulin lowers your blood sugar level by helping sugar move from your blood into your cells.



## What happens when you have diabetes?

When you have diabetes:

- Your pancreas does not make any insulin, or
- It does not make enough insulin (and over time will make less and less), or
- Your body prevents the insulin you do make from working right

As a result, sugar can't get into your cells. So it stays in your blood. That's why your blood sugar gets too high. Following your diabetes care plan helps keep your sugar and insulin in balance, the way your body did before diabetes.

## Type 1 and type 2 diabetes

The most common types of diabetes are type 1 and type 2.

**In type 1 diabetes**, the body does not make insulin. Insulin must be injected into the body. Type 1 diabetes occurs more often in children and young adults than in older adults.

**In type 2 diabetes**, the body makes some insulin, but not enough. Or the body prevents the insulin it does make from working right. Most people with diabetes have type 2. Many are adults older than age 40 years. But the number of children and young adults with type 2 diabetes is rising, mainly because of obesity.

## Managing blood sugar is the key to managing diabetes

When high blood sugar is not managed, it can cause serious health problems. Over time, high blood sugar can damage your blood vessels and nerves. This can lead to problems such as:

- Heart attack and stroke
- Nerve disease
- Eye disease
- Infections
- Kidney disease
- Problems with your legs and feet



# What is diabetes?

## Checking your blood sugar

Checking your blood sugar yourself—and checking it often—is one of the best ways to make sure that your diabetes is under control. You can check your blood sugar using a meter. Many different kinds of blood sugar meters are available today. Your diabetes care team can help you choose a meter and learn how to use it. You and your diabetes care team will set blood sugar goals based on your diabetes care plan. The table on this page lists blood sugar goals that many doctors suggest for people with diabetes. Use the last column to write your goals.

Time	Goals for people with diabetes	Your goals
Before meals	70 to 130 mg/dL	
1-2 hours after the start of a meal	Less than 180 mg/dL	
A1C	Less than 7%	

Adapted from the American Diabetes Association. Standards of medical care in diabetes—2009. *Diabetes Care*. 2009;32(suppl 1):S13-S61.

## Managing your diabetes every day

Diabetes cannot yet be cured, but it *can* be managed. You can manage it by taking good care of yourself. Your diabetes care team will help you develop a diabetes care plan that is right for you. If you have questions about your plan, be sure to let your team know!



For more information, call the Novo Nordisk Diabetes Tip Line at 1-800-260-3730, or visit us online at [ChangingDiabetes-us.com](http://ChangingDiabetes-us.com).

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