

Know Your Risks of Diabetes



Did you know that more than 37 million Americans have Diabetes? In fact, one in five people don't even know they have it. [Diabetes is a chronic health condition](#) that affects how your body turns food into energy.

Diabetes explained

Most of the food you eat is broken down into sugar, or glucose, and released into your bloodstream. When your blood sugar goes up, your pancreas should release insulin, which acts like a key to let the blood sugar into your body's cells for use as energy.

But if you have diabetes, your body either doesn't make enough insulin or can't use the insulin it makes as well as it should and too much blood sugar stays in your bloodstream. Over time, that can cause heart disease, vision loss, kidney disease or other health problems. There are two primary types of diabetes:

Type 1 Diabetes

The body does not produce insulin. Insulin therapy and other treatments and lifestyle changes can help people live long, healthy lives.

Type 2 Diabetes

This is the most common form of diabetes where the body doesn't use insulin properly. Some people can control their blood sugar levels with healthy eating and exercise, but others may need medication or insulin to help manage it.

What is prediabetes?

More than 96 million Americans have prediabetes, which means their blood sugar levels are higher than normal, but not high enough yet to be diagnosed as type 2 diabetes. Plus, eight in ten people don't even know they have prediabetes because there are no clear symptoms.

[Prediabetes does increase the risk of type 2 diabetes](#), heart disease, and stroke. The good news is that it can be reversed. Early treatment as well as moderate lifestyle changes can return blood sugar levels to a normal range, effectively preventing or delaying type 2 diabetes.

Test yourself

[You can take this simple 60-second Type 2 Diabetes Risk Test](#) created by the American Diabetes Association to help assess your health status and risk. It asks a few questions about your background, your body and habits.

You can also ask your provider about getting an A1C test. It's a simple blood test that can identify prediabetes or diagnose type 1 or type 2 diabetes. The results can also determine your average blood sugar over the past few months.

Lifestyle changes can reduce your risk of developing prediabetes and diabetes. Here are a few suggestions:

- Maintain a healthy weight and get regular exercise
- Stop using tobacco products
- Monitor your blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar at your annual physical exam
- Get 7–8 hours of sleep
- Practice stress management

Medical Mutual's Chronic Condition Management program

If you have been diagnosed with diabetes, our Chronic Condition Management program can help you better manage your condition and is provided at no additional cost to you. This program supports the care you receive from your healthcare providers and offers both digital and telephonic support options. Your plan may even include supply incentives. Call 1-800-590-2583 to see if you might be eligible for our diabetes management or diabetes prevention program. Our care management specialists are available Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. (confidential voicemail available 24/7).

Talk to your primary care provider (PCP)

It's always a good idea to talk to your PCP if you have concerns about prediabetes or diabetes. If you don't have a PCP, [you can use the Find a Provider tool after logging in to My Health Plan](#).

If you need help finding a PCP, or have questions about your benefit plan, call Customer Care at the number listed on your member ID card.