

Help! I Have Prediabetes!

Symptoms of Prediabetes/Diabetes

Frequent urination.

Extreme fatigue.

Feeling very thirsty.

Cuts or bruises that are slow to heal.

Feeling very hungry, even when eating.

Tingling, pain or numbness in the hands or feet.

Blurred vision.

(Source: American Diabetes Association)

Have you or someone you love been diagnosed with prediabetes? Here's what you need to know.

What is prediabetes? If your blood sugar (glucose) level is higher than normal but not high enough to be classified as diabetes, then you have prediabetes.

Are there other names for prediabetes? Prediabetes is also referred to as impaired fasting glucose (IFG) or impaired glucose tolerance (IGT). It used to be called borderline diabetes.

But I feel fine... Some people with prediabetes have no symptoms. Others have some of the symptoms of diabetes. Regardless, you can have prediabetes and diabetes for years and not know it. High blood sugar can silently wreak havoc on your body, harming your eyes, nerves, kidneys, and heart. Prediabetes also puts you at greater risk for type 2 diabetes, heart disease and stroke.

Does this mean that I will get diabetes? Up to 30% of people with prediabetes go on to develop type 2 diabetes. But for some, prediabetes will resolve with early treatment that

includes diet and exercise. If you have prediabetes, get tested for diabetes regularly.

Do I need medication? Smart food choices and physical activity can usually lower your blood sugar when you have prediabetes. Your doctor might prescribe a medication if you are at high risk for diabetes and have other medical conditions, such as obesity, high triglycerides, low HDL cholesterol, or hypertension.

Should other people in my family get tested for prediabetes? According to the American Diabetes Association (ADA), anyone who is overweight and over age 45 should be tested for prediabetes. You should also consider testing if you are over age 45 or under age 45 but overweight and/or facing other diabetes risk factors.

What can I do about it? Treating prediabetes and delaying or preventing diabetes is all about controlling your blood sugar. You can do this by eating a healthful diet and not skipping meals, exercising moderately for at least 30 minutes five days/week, and losing just 5-10% of your body weight.

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Diabetes Risk Factors

Overweight or obese.

African American, Native American, Latin American or Asian/Pacific Islander.

Family history of diabetes.

Gestational diabetes or giving birth to a baby that was >9 lbs.

Low HDL (good) cholesterol or high triglycerides.

High blood pressure.

Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS).

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