

What is Type 2 Diabetes?

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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 conditions in the United States.

What causes type 2 diabetes?

It is thought that type 2 diabetes takes many years to develop. 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 for developing type 2 diabetes?

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

- Age—usually older than 40 years of age, although increasing numbers of children and adolescents are developing the disease
- Ethnic group—African American, Hispanic/Latino American, American Indian,

Asian American and Pacific Islander

- Family history—family member with diabetes
- Sedentary lifestyle
- Overweight, especially around the waist
- Women having had gestational diabetes
- Women who gave birth to a baby weighing 9 or more pounds
- Polycystic ovary syndrome
- Individuals with “pre-diabetes”—condition in which blood sugar levels are higher than normal, but not yet high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes

What are the common symptoms of type 2 diabetes?

Common symptoms of type 2 diabetes may include the following:

- Increased thirst
- Increased urination
- Unexplained weight loss
- Frequent infections
- Problems with sexual function
- Numbness or tingling in hands and feet

Some individuals with diabetes have no symptoms at all.

