



DIABETES

CONCERNS EVERY FAMILY

Questions & Answers

Q1 If my parent or sibling has type 2 diabetes, I am at an increased risk to develop type 2 diabetes.

Ans. True - A family history of type 2 diabetes is a strong risk factor for the disease. If you have a mother, father, brother, or sister with diabetes, you are at risk for type 2 diabetes. But even if you have a family history of type 2 diabetes, there are many things you can do to lower your risk. If you're overweight, losing five to seven percent of your body weight (for example, 10 pounds if you weigh 200 pounds) by exercising 30 minutes a day, five days a week and making healthy food choices can help to prevent or delay type 2 diabetes.

Q2 My mother has been told by her health care team that she is at high risk for diabetes, or that she has prediabetes, so she will get diabetes very soon.

Ans. False - Studies have shown that people at high risk for diabetes or with prediabetes can turn back the clock to delay or even prevent a diagnosis of diabetes by losing five to seven percent of your body weight if overweight (for example, 10 pounds if you weigh 200 pounds). You and your family can lose a modest amount of weight through simple lifestyle changes, such as increasing physical activity to about 30 minutes a day, five days a week and making healthy food choices. For some people with prediabetes, intervening early can actually return elevated blood glucose (also called blood sugar) levels to the normal range.

Q3. Type 2 diabetes runs in my family, so there is nothing I can do to prevent getting the disease.

Ans. False - Even though a family history of type 2 diabetes is a strong risk factor for developing the disease, some of this risk is a result of lifestyle. Being overweight, making unhealthy food choices, and not getting enough exercise can increase your risk for type 2 diabetes. If you are overweight, losing five to seven percent of your body weight (by making healthy food choices and increasing physical activity to about 30 minutes a day, five days a week can help lower your risk for type 2 diabetes. Adopting healthy habits as an individual or as a family is good for everyone.

Q4 My mother was diagnosed with diabetes when she was pregnant with me so she and I are both at an increased risk for developing diabetes.

True - When a woman gets diabetes during pregnancy, called gestational diabetes, she is at an increased risk for developing diabetes for the rest of her life. Additionally, her child is at an increased risk for becoming obese and for developing type 2 diabetes for the rest of his or her life. But there are many ways to lower this risk for both mother and child.