



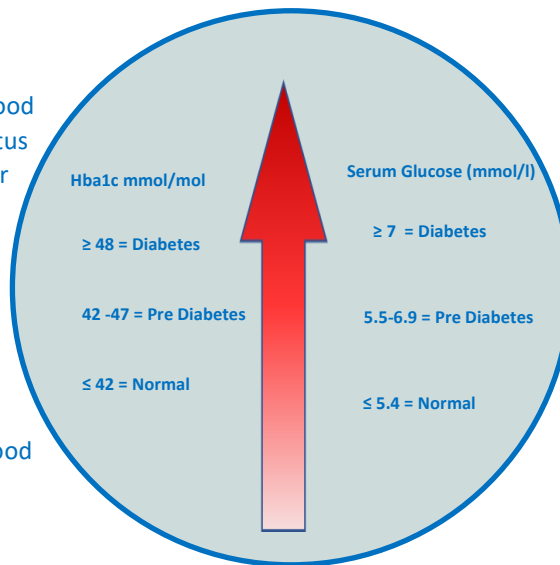
DESI DIABETES

Pre-Diabetes

What is Pre-Diabetes?

Being told you have Pre-Diabetes may have come to you as a shock and left you confused and thinking, do I have Diabetes? Pre-Diabetes means your glucose levels are above normal but lower than the level of a diagnosis of Diabetes. Meaning you do not have diabetes but are at higher risk of developing Type 2 Diabetes in the future. Here in the UK, Pre-Diabetes is confirmed by doing one of two blood tests:

One of these is the Hba1c blood test. This test tells us the status of our blood sugar levels over the past 3 months. It informs us how much glucose is attached to our red blood cells and as the life span of a red blood cell is usually 3 months, this test allows us to determine the average of blood glucose levels in the last 3 months.



The second test is the serum glucose test, this test tells us simply how much glucose was in the blood at the point the blood sample was taken. To interpret this test accurately the blood needs to be taken as a fasting blood test (nothing to eat 8 hours before the blood test). This test is like the finger prick blood samples that are taken using glucose machines.

If you have been told by your GP you are Pre-Diabetic this should be a wake-up call to make changes to your lifestyle to prevent developing Diabetes in the future.

What are the risk factors?

- Being from a South Asian background further increases the risk of Diabetes by 6 times
- Being overweight, especially if you carry excess weight around the waist. As a rule of thumb, your weight measurement should be around half your height measurement. Anything greater than this puts you at greater risk of developing Diabetes
- Reduced physical activity, excess sugars begin to build up in the bloodstream rather than being used for energy production
- Excess consumption of sugary foods, eating refined foods, and excess amounts of carbohydrates
- Having a family history of Diabetes



How can I improve my glucose levels?

The key to reducing glucose levels is to improve your diet and lifestyle, here are some key points:

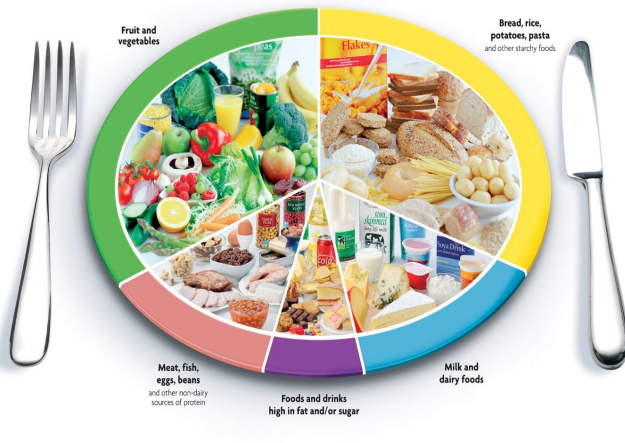
- **Exercise** - aim for at least 30 minutes of exercise at least 5 days a week. This does not have to be going to the gym or going for a run. Simple things such as putting on your favourite songs and having a dance or walking daily at a moderate pace are good enough to burn the excess sugar in our bodies. If you suffer from medical issues that prevent you from exercising that long, try walking 10 minutes three times a day instead.
- **Diet** - try to cut down on sweet treats - cakes, biscuits, sweets, chocolates, Indian mithai, fizzy drinks, juices, desserts, and sugar in tea/coffee. You don't need to cut these out completely but have them as a treat once or twice a week instead of daily. Glucose not only comes from sweet foods but also from carbohydrates, which break down into sugar. Reduce portion size of Carbohydrates, at each meal aim for 1 carbohydrate which should only make up a third of your plate. Try to eat healthier carbs



such as roti made from wholemeal flour instead of white flour to provide more fibre as well as release sugars more slowly into the bloodstream.

The eatwell plate

Use the eatwell plate to help you get the balance right. It shows how much of what you eat should come from each food group.



Follow Up

Your GP should repeat your glucose test in a year to determine any improvement in blood results or whether further treatment is required. However, if you notice any symptoms of Diabetes such as feeling thirsty, tiredness, needing to wee more often, or any weight loss, then get in touch with your GP to have a glucose blood test done sooner. Once diagnosed as Pre-Diabetic most GPs will offer you a free referral to the National Diabetes Prevention Programme, which is great for providing education on Diabetes and how we can prevent the development of Diabetes going forward.

Did you know?

We should have no more than 7 spoons of sugar a day. Look at your intake from the foods and drinks you consume to determine how much sugar you are having daily.

A can of Coke contains 8 spoons of sugar!

Read the nutritional values on the packs of food—roughly 4g of sugar is equivalent to 1 spoon of sugar.