

Prediabetes: Care Instructions



Overview

Prediabetes is a warning sign that you're at risk for getting type 2 diabetes. It means that your blood sugar is higher than it should be. But it's not high enough to be diabetes.

The food you eat naturally turns into sugar. Your body uses the sugar for energy. Normally, an organ called the pancreas makes insulin. And insulin allows the sugar in your blood to get into your body's cells. But sometimes the body can't use insulin the right way. So the sugar stays in your blood instead. This is called insulin resistance. The buildup of sugar in your blood means you have prediabetes.

The good news is that you may be able to prevent or delay diabetes. Making small lifestyle changes, like getting active and changing your eating habits, may help you get your blood sugar back to normal. You can work with your doctor to make a treatment plan.

Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

How can you care for yourself at home?

- Watch your weight. A healthy weight helps your body use insulin properly.
- Limit the amount of calories, sweets, and unhealthy fat you eat. Ask your doctor if you should see a dietitian. A registered dietitian can help you create meal plans that fit your lifestyle.
- Get at least 30 minutes of exercise on most days of the week. Exercise helps control your blood sugar. It also helps you maintain a healthy weight. Walking is a good choice. You also may want to do other activities, such as running, swimming, cycling, or playing tennis or team sports.
- Do not smoke. Smoking can make prediabetes worse. If you need help quitting, talk to your doctor about stop-smoking programs and medicines. These can increase your chances of quitting for good.
- If your doctor prescribed medicines, take them exactly as prescribed. Call your doctor if you think you are having a problem with your medicine. You will get more details on the specific medicines your doctor prescribes.

When should you call for help?

Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor if:

- You have any symptoms of diabetes. These may include:
 - Being thirsty more often.
 - Urinating more.
 - Being hungrier.
 - Losing weight.
 - Being very tired.
 - Having blurry vision.
- You have a wound that will not heal.
- You have an infection that will not go away.
- You have problems with your blood pressure.
- You want more information about diabetes and how you can keep from getting it.

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