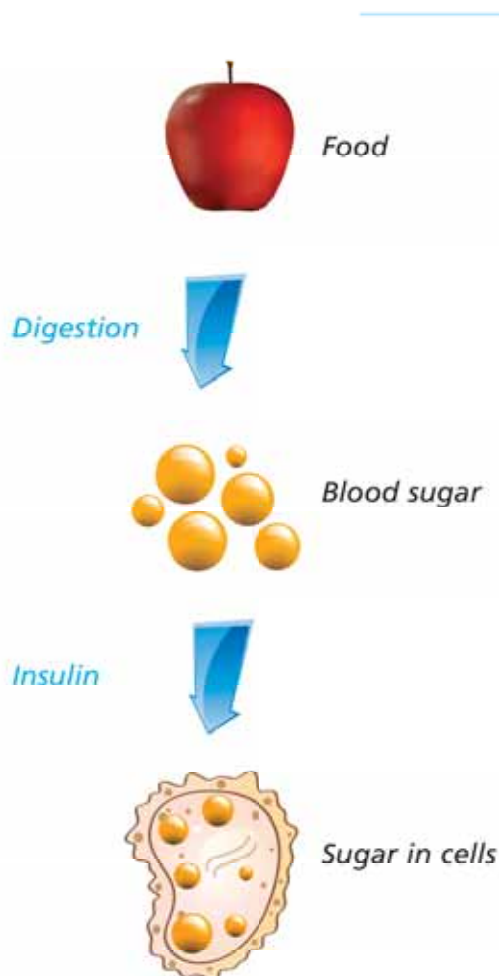


# What is diabetes?

Cornerstones4Care™

Diabetes is a condition in which sugar levels in your blood are high. When you eat, some of your food is broken down into sugar (also called glucose). Sugar travels in your blood to all your body's cells. Insulin helps sugar move from your blood into your cells. Insulin is a hormone that is made by the beta cells in your pancreas.

Your cells need sugar for energy. Sugar from food makes your blood sugar levels go up. Insulin lowers your blood sugar level by helping sugar move from your blood into your cells.



## What happens when you have diabetes?

When you have diabetes:

- Your pancreas makes little or no insulin, or
- Your body prevents the insulin you do make from working right



As a result, sugar can't get into your cells. So it stays in your blood. That's why your blood sugar gets too high (also called hyperglycemia).

## Types of diabetes

Three common types of diabetes are type 1, type 2, and gestational diabetes.

**In type 1 diabetes**, the body makes little or no insulin. So people with type 1 diabetes must take insulin every day. Type 1 diabetes usually occurs more often in children and young adults, but it can also appear in older adults.

**In type 2 diabetes**, your body prevents the insulin it does make from working right. Your body may make some insulin, but not enough. Most people with diabetes—about 90% to 95%—have type 2. This kind of diabetes usually happens in people who are older or in those who are overweight. In fact, about 8 out of 10 people with type 2 diabetes are overweight.

**Gestational diabetes** is high blood sugar that develops during pregnancy. About 3 to 8 of every 100 pregnant women develop it. Blood sugar levels usually return to normal after the baby is born. But gestational diabetes can increase the risk of getting type 2 diabetes later in life.

# What is diabetes?

## Checking your blood sugar

Checking your blood sugar is often the best way to be sure that your diabetes is under control. Checking often will tell you:

- If your insulin or other diabetes medicine is working
- How physical activity and the foods you eat affect your blood sugar

You'll usually feel better and have more energy when your blood sugar stays at or near normal. Managing your blood sugar can also reduce your risk of developing problems from diabetes.

Many different kinds of blood sugar meters are available today. Your diabetes care team can help you choose a meter and show you how to use it.

The table on this page lists blood sugar goals for people with diabetes. You and your doctor will set the goals that are right for you. Write your goals in the last column.



| Time                                   | Goals for people with type 1 or type 2 diabetes* | Your goals |
|--|--|------------|
| Before meals                           | 70 to 130 mg/dL                                  |            |
| 1 to 2 hours after the start of a meal | Less than 180 mg/dL                              |            |
| A1C                                    | Less than 7%                                     |            |

\*If you have gestational diabetes, your doctor will talk with you about the blood sugar goals that are right for you. Adapted from the American Diabetes Association. Standards of medical care in diabetes—2011. *Diabetes Care*. 2011;34(suppl 1):S11-S61.

## Managing your diabetes every day

Diabetes cannot yet be cured, but it **can** be managed. You can manage it by taking good care of yourself. Your diabetes care team will help you develop a diabetes care plan that is right for you. If you have questions about your plan, be sure to let your team know!

For more information, visit [Cornerstones4Care.com](http://Cornerstones4Care.com)

Novo Nordisk Inc. grants permission to reproduce this piece for nonprofit educational purposes only on condition that the piece is maintained in its original format and that the copyright notice is displayed. Novo Nordisk Inc. reserves the right to revoke this permission at any time.

Cornerstones4Care™ is a trademark of Novo Nordisk A/S.

