

All About Your Risk for Prediabetes, Type 2 Diabetes, and Heart Disease

What does prediabetes have to do with type 2 diabetes and heart disease?

When you have prediabetes, your blood glucose (sugar) levels are higher than normal but are not high enough to be called diabetes. But if your blood glucose goes higher, you can develop type 2 diabetes. Type 2 diabetes can lead to heart disease, stroke, nerve damage, kidney failure, and eye problems. The good news is you can take steps to delay or prevent diabetes, and heart disease.

How can I delay or prevent prediabetes, type 2 diabetes, and heart disease?

You can delay or prevent type 2 diabetes and heart disease—by losing weight through eating fewer calories and less fat and being more active.

A study of people at high risk for type 2 diabetes found that people could lower their risk for diabetes. They ate less than usual, increased their daily activity, and lost weight. They did this by

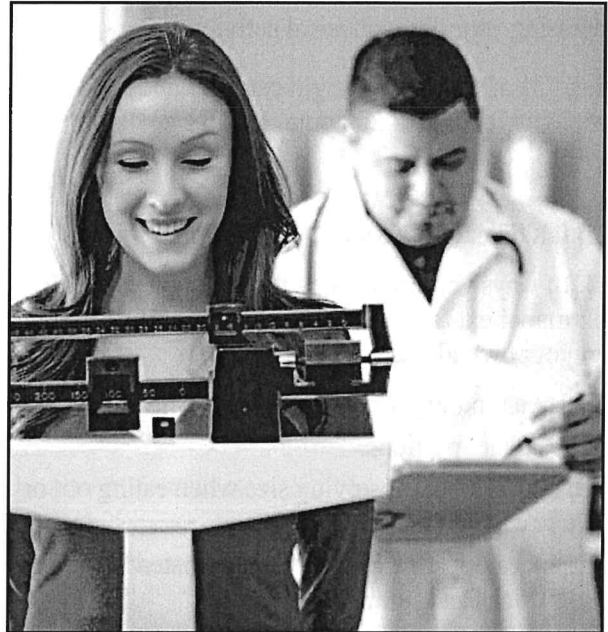
- losing weight—an average of 15 pounds in the first year of the study
- eating fewer calories
- cutting down on foods high in saturated fat
- exercising about 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week, usually by walking quickly

These actions worked for both men and women.

What raises my risk for prediabetes and diabetes?

You're at risk if you

- are age 45 or older
- are African American, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian, Asian American, or Pacific Islander
- have a parent, brother, or sister with diabetes
- are overweight
- are physically inactive



If you develop prediabetes, you're at risk for type 2 diabetes and heart disease. But you can take steps to delay or prevent these conditions.

- have high blood pressure or if you take medicine for high blood pressure
- have low HDL cholesterol and/or high triglycerides
- are a woman who had diabetes during pregnancy
- have been diagnosed with Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS)

How can I find out whether I have prediabetes?

You can have prediabetes but not know it. You'll need a blood test to check your blood glucose level.

- If you're 45 or older, ask your health care provider to check your blood glucose level.
- No matter what your age, if you're overweight and have at least one other risk for diabetes, ask your health care provider about getting tested.

How can I prevent or delay diabetes?

You can prevent or delay type 2 diabetes by

- losing weight
- cutting back on calories and saturated fat
- increasing your daily physical activity

Losing 7% of your total weight can help a lot. For example, if you weigh 200 pounds, your goal might be to lose 15 pounds.

Cut back on calories and fat

Think of ways you can change the way you eat. Place a check mark next to the steps you'd like to try. Or write down your own ideas.

- ☐ Keep a food log for a week or two.
- ☐ Eat smaller portions.
- ☐ Order the smallest serving size when eating out or share a main dish.
- ☐ Drink calorie-free drinks or water instead of regular soft drinks and juice.
- ☐ Fill up on leafy vegetables by starting your meals with a green salad.
- ☐ Check and compare food labels and choose foods with fewer calories.
- ☐ Bake, broil, or grill and use nonstick pans and cooking sprays.
- ☐ Eat more vegetables and whole grain foods.
- ☐ Cut back on calories and saturated fat by

Increase your physical activity

Get moving! Place a check mark next to the ways you'll try to add activity to your day. Or write down your own ideas.

- ☐ Keep an activity log for a week or two.
- ☐ Use a pedometer to track your steps. Aim to work up to 10,000 steps every day.
- ☐ Buddy up with a friend or family member.
- ☐ Spend more time being active. Try working in the yard, riding a bike, or playing with your kids or grandchildren. Or do something else active that you enjoy.
- ☐ Take a walk every day. Work up to 30 minutes of brisk walking, at least 5 days a week. Or split 30 minutes into 2 or 3 walks.
- ☐ Start strength training by lifting light weights a few times a week.
- ☐ Try a new activity, like a yoga class, Pilates exercise, or a dance class.
- ☐ Add activity to your day by

Small steps can help

You don't have to make big changes to be healthier. Small steps can add up to big results. Make a plan that works for you.

Online resources from the American Diabetes Association

- Check your risk for type 2 diabetes and heart disease at CheckUpAmerica.org/MHA.
- For recipes and information about meal planning, visit diabetes.org/recipes.

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All About Prediabetes

What is prediabetes?

Prediabetes is a condition that can lead to type 2 diabetes and heart disease. When you have prediabetes, your blood glucose (sugar) levels are higher than normal but are not high enough to be called diabetes. Diabetes can lead to many health problems, so it's better to prevent it in the first place. You can take steps to prevent or delay type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

Why do I have prediabetes?

You are likely to develop prediabetes when you have certain risk factors. Your chances of having prediabetes go up if you

- are age 45 or older
- are African American, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian, Asian American, or Pacific Islander
- have a parent, brother, or sister with diabetes
- are overweight
- are physically inactive
- have high blood pressure or if you take medicine for high blood pressure
- have low HDL cholesterol and/or high triglycerides
- are a woman who had diabetes during pregnancy
- have been diagnosed with Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS)

How can I prevent or delay diabetes?

You can prevent or delay type 2 diabetes from developing by

- cutting back on calories and saturated fat
- losing weight
- increasing your daily physical activity

If you're overweight, losing 7% of your total weight can help you a lot. For example, if you weigh 200 pounds, your goal would be to lose 15 pounds.



Work with your health care provider to take care of your prediabetes.

How do I decide what to do?

You don't have to make big changes. Small steps can add up to big results. Check out the ideas for eating less and moving more.

Your health care team can help you make a plan. Talk about ways to be active, such as

- walking briskly for at least 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week
- being more active throughout the day by parking further from the store, or taking the stairs.

Make a plan to eat less fat and calories. You can meet with a dietitian to talk about what to eat and how to lose weight. You might try

- starting each dinner with a salad of leafy greens. Salad provides nutrients and fills you up. Then you might eat less of any high-calorie foods that might come later.
- switching from regular soda and juice to no-calorie water.

Are there any medicines to treat prediabetes?

If you're at very high risk for diabetes, your health care provider might give you a medicine to help prevent or delay diabetes. For most people, eating less, being more active, and losing weight work better than taking medicines.

How often should I be checked for prediabetes?

If you have been told you have prediabetes, have your blood glucose levels checked every year. Your health care provider may want to check your glucose levels more often, especially if you're taking a medicine for prediabetes.

What else should my health care provider check?

When you have prediabetes, your health care provider should also check for signs of heart disease and blood vessel problems. For example, your health care provider might check your blood pressure and your cholesterol. Talk with your health care team about what to do if your blood pressure or cholesterol levels are too high. Making wise food choices, staying active, and taking medicines (if needed) can help you stay healthy.

What does having prediabetes mean for my health in the future?

Having prediabetes is your early warning system. Take action now and avoid the problems that diabetes and heart disease could bring. Small steps can make a big difference in your health. Choose 2 or 3 small steps today.

Real-Life Stories from People with Prediabetes

I had my blood glucose level checked last year and was shocked to find out I had prediabetes. I was a little overweight then. And I hadn't been exercising because I was busy working and taking care of the kids. But it really scared me to learn I was at risk for type 2 diabetes. I cut back on sweets and ate veggies and fruit instead. I also bought a pedometer—a step counter. When I first started, my goal was 7,500 steps every day. Then after a couple of months I changed my goal to 10,000 steps, 5 days a week. I lost 15 pounds! I feel much better now. Today I found out my blood glucose level is back to normal. I feel good about what I've done for my health.

—**Julia B., age 49**
diagnosed with prediabetes last year

Online resources from the American Diabetes Association

- Visit diabetes.org/prediabetes to learn more about managing your prediabetes.
- Learn about CheckUp America, the Association's program to help people lower their risk for type 2 diabetes and heart disease, at checkupamerica.org.
- For recipes and information about meal planning, see Recipes for Healthy Living at diabetes.org/recipes.

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