



University of Kentucky  
College of Agriculture,  
Food and Environment  
Cooperative Extension Service

# ADULT HEALTH BULLETIN



**NOVEMBER 2021**

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## THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: DIABETES



**N**ovember is American Diabetes Month, the best time for you to find out if you are at risk and to learn more about diabetes. Diabetes is a long-lasting disease that affects how your body turns food into energy. There are three major types of diabetes: type 1, type 2, and gestational (diabetes when pregnant). Type 2 diabetes accounts for 90% to 95% of all cases.

Currently, 34.2 million U.S. adults have diabetes. One in 5 of them do not know they have it. In Kentucky, as in most other states, the rate of diabetes continues to climb. In 2019, 13.3% of Kentucky adults learned they have diabetes.

### What are the causes and risk factors for diabetes?

Sadly, the causes of type 1 diabetes are not known. However, you increase your risk

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Disabilities  
accommodated  
with prior notification.

# Research shows that a structured, healthy lifestyle can cut the risk of type 2 diabetes in half.



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for type 2 diabetes by being overweight, having a family history of diabetes, using tobacco products, excessive alcohol use, a prior history of gestational diabetes, and not getting enough exercise.

### What are the symptoms of diabetes?

- **Type 1 diabetes symptoms:** frequent urination, excessive thirst, constant hunger, weight loss, very dry skin, vision changes, and fatigue.
- **Type 2 diabetes symptoms:** are similar to those of type 1 diabetes, but are often less obvious. As a result, the disease may be diagnosed several years after onset, increasing the risk of other health issues.

If you are having any of these symptoms, visit your doctor.

### What can be done to prevent and control diabetes?

Because the cause of type 1 diabetes is not known yet, we cannot prevent it. The good news is that simple lifestyle measures are effective in preventing or delaying type 2 diabetes. Research shows that a structured, healthy lifestyle can cut the risk of type 2 diabetes in half.

- Achieve and maintain a healthy body weight.

- Be physically active, meaning at least 30 minutes of regular activity most days.
- Eat a healthy diet of three to five servings of fruit and vegetables a day, and reduce sugar and saturated fats intake.
- Quit tobacco use.
- Avoid excessive use of alcohol.

If you have already been diagnosed with diabetes, it is crucial to talk with your health-care provider to learn the best ways to monitor and manage your diabetes. Typical strategies involve eating well, exercising, taking medication, checking your blood glucose level regularly, and avoiding stress.

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- <https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/resources/publications/factsheets/diabetes-prediabetes.htm>

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Written by: Natalie Jones  
Edited by: Alyssa Simms  
Designed by: Rusty Manseau  
Stock images: 123RF.com

