

Diabetes in Kentucky

Type 2 Diabetes



In 2005, approximately 8.9 percent of Kentucky's adult population had been diagnosed with **diabetes**. **Diabetes** is the number one cause of disability for Kentuckians and the fifth leading cause of death by disease. Among the 50 states, Kentucky ranks seventh for having the highest number in the adult population diagnosed with **diabetes**. The cost of **diabetes** in both life and medical care is alarming. In 2002 approximately 2.9 billion dollars was spent on treating **diabetes** in Kentucky. Preventing this catastrophic disease is a priority. An estimated 40.1 percent of Kentuckians (adults aged 40 to 74) have pre-diabetes and may develop type 2 **diabetes** within 10 years if they do not change lifestyle habits. Identifying those at risk for **diabetes** is one of the keys to reducing both the disease and cost of this disease in Kentucky.

What is type 2 diabetes?

Type 2 diabetes was previously known as adult onset or non-insulin dependent **diabetes**. In **type 2 diabetes** the body does not make enough **insulin** or the **insulin** is not used properly by the body (insulin resistant) or both. **Insulin** is a hormone that helps the glucose in the blood enter the body's cells, where it is either used immediately for energy or stored for later use. Without **insulin**, the blood glucose builds up in the bloodstream and cause damage to the heart, blood vessels, eyes, kidneys, and nerves. Approximately 90 to 95 percent of all people diagnosed with **diabetes** are type 2. Children and teens are among the fastest growing group of people being diagnosed with this type of **diabetes**.

What are the signs and symptoms of type 2 diabetes?

- Frequent urination (having to go to the bathroom more often than usual for no apparent reason).
- Excessive thirst (even after drinking an adequate amount).
- Fatigue (feeling tired).
- Extreme hunger (when you normally should not be hungry).
- Unusual weight loss (not explained by dieting or increased physical activity).
- Blurred vision resulting from fluid leaking into the lens of the eye from elevated blood glucose. This condition causes the lens of the eye to swell making it unable to focus properly. This condition may occur at the onset of diabetes or during periods when blood glucose fluctuates. It passes with time or when blood glucose levels decrease.
- Dry, itchy skin.

- Tingling or numbness in feet (may be a sign of damage to the blood vessels or nerves in your feet due to undiagnosed or untreated **diabetes**).

These signs and symptoms may indicate **diabetes** (although you may have no signs and symptoms). Your health care provider is the **ONLY ONE** who can make the diagnosis. **DO NOT** rely on symptoms only.

What are the risk factors for type 2 diabetes?

Being:

- Overweight.
- Over 45 years of age.
- Physically inactive.
- A member of high risk ethnic group (African-American, American Indian, Hispanic, Asian-American, or Pacific Islander).

Having:

- A family history of **diabetes** (mother, father, brother, sister, or grandparents).
- An **HDL** (good cholesterol) less than 35.
- **Triglycerides** greater than 250.
- A history of pre-diabetes.
- Conditions associated with insulin resistance such as **polycystic ovary syndrome** and **acanthosis nigricans** (a skin condition that commonly occurs around the neck or in skin folds and appears thick and dark).
- Or had a history of vascular disease.

Had:

- **Diabetes** during pregnancy and/or baby greater than 9 pounds.

Ways to prevent, slow progression, and manage type 2 diabetes

Try to stay as healthy as possible by maintaining a healthy weight, practicing good handwashing techniques for staying germ-free, decreasing stress, and getting adequate amounts of sleep.

Here are some overall tips for preventing and/or slowing progression of **type 2 diabetes**:

- Know your risk factors.
- Undertake modest weight loss (5 to 7 percent).
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Change your eating habits by making healthier choices. Eat more fruits and vegetables and eat fewer foods high in fat.
- Increase physical activity. If you are not currently in a physical activity program, begin one. Get up and get moving. Participate in 30 minutes of physical activity every day. It is important to check with your doctor before beginning a physical activity program.
- Have regular doctor checkups.
- Visit your eye doctor once a year or as recommended by your doctor.
- Visit your dentist every six months for a checkup.
- Check your feet daily for signs of infection and/or injury.
- Promptly report any new health problem to your health care provider.

References

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This is a publication in a five-part series on diabetes. Other publications in this series are:

- General diabetes information: HSW-PAR.814
- Pre-diabetes: HSW-PAR.815
- Type 1 diabetes: HSW-PAR.816
- Gestational diabetes: HSW-PAR.818

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