

# 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

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### 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.
- Get up and move every 90 minutes if you sit for long periods of time. Add activity to your day by

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### 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](http://CheckUpAmerica.org/MHA).
- For recipes and information about meal planning, visit [diabetes.org/recipes](http://diabetes.org/recipes).

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