

UNDERSTANDING DIABETES



What is diabetes?

Diabetes is a group of conditions that results in too much sugar in your blood. After you eat cereal and juice at breakfast, the food is broken down into a sugar called *glucose*, which floods into your bloodstream. Your blood carries glucose to cells throughout your body. *Insulin*, a hormone made by the pancreas, is spilled into the blood stream to help glucose move from the bloodstream into muscles, where it is burned for energy to keep your body functioning. Glucose may also be moved into fat cells to be stored for future use. With diabetes either your body no longer makes insulin (type 1) or your body can't use the insulin it makes (type 2).

Insulin resistance happens when your body's cells don't recognize insulin and glucose can't get out of the blood stream and into the cells. This creates a buildup of sugar in the blood. To compensate, the pancreas pumps out more insulin. Now the blood has both too much sugar and too much insulin because the route into the cells is not working. Having too much insulin or too much sugar in your blood will cause damage to important body cells over time.

Preventing Insulin Resistance

Lose weight – *Losing weight makes fat and muscle cells more sensitive to insulin.*

Eat right – *Eat lots of fruits and vegetables, choose whole grains, use more avocado, nut, olive and canola oils which make cells more responsive to insulin.*

Move it and lift it – *Exercise of all kinds improves insulin resistance.*

Get enough sleep – *Aim for at least 7 to 8 hours each night. Research shows 1 night of poor sleep can decrease insulin sensitivity in cells by 25%.*

What causes diabetes?

In most cases, it's your genes. But some very new research shows that changes in the way your cells work could trigger diabetes, too. In the U.S., over 8% of the population has diabetes – that's close to 26 million people. It's estimated that a person born in 2000 has a 1 in 3 chance of developing diabetes in their lifetime. But, the good news – are you getting the picture, that there is