

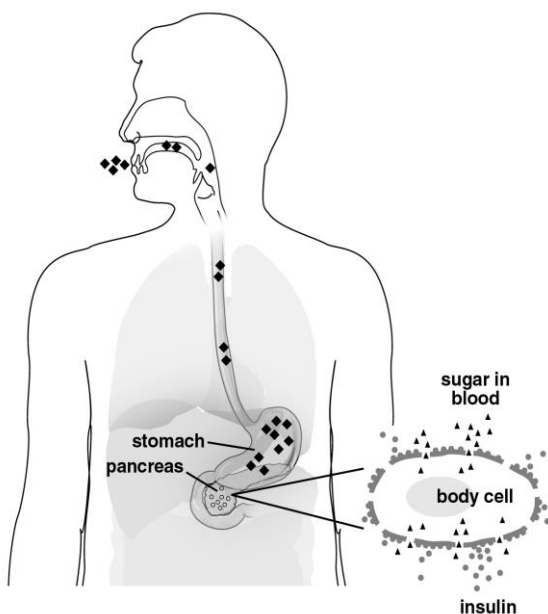
## Type 2 Diabetes

Type 2 diabetes means that your body cannot use or store glucose (sugar) as it should. You may have enough insulin, but it does not work as it should to open cell walls for glucose to enter. This is called insulin resistance. It is the main problem of type 2 diabetes.

Your pancreas makes insulin. When blood glucose levels rise, the body releases insulin to keep blood glucose levels normal. After years of your pancreas working extra hard to do this, it gets tired and can no longer keep up. Insulin supply goes down and blood glucose levels go up. This is when type 2 diabetes is diagnosed.

### Food and Insulin

Most of the food you eat turns into glucose and enters the blood. The rise in blood sugar after a meal causes the pancreas to release insulin. Insulin is needed to move glucose into the cells. Once inside the cells, glucose is burned for energy.



### Symptoms of High Blood Glucose

You may not have any symptoms. The symptoms of type 2 diabetes come on slowly, over months and even years. Symptoms could include:

- Frequent urination
- Feeling tired
- Thirst
- Dry or itchy skin
- Frequent infections
- Slow healing
- Numbness or tingling in toes or fingers
- Blurred vision

### Diagnosis

- A1C test result of 6.5% or higher
- Fasting blood glucose of 126 mg/dL or higher (“Fasting” means nothing to eat for at least 8 hours before the test.)
- Symptoms of diabetes and blood glucose of 200 mg/dL or higher

### Risk Factors

- Over age 45
- Family history of diabetes
- Race/ethnicity (Native American, African American, Latino, Asian American, Pacific Islander)
- Overweight
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Physical inactivity
- History of diabetes during pregnancy
- Given birth to a baby weighing over 9 pounds

**Treatment**

Diet and exercise improve blood glucose. If healthy lifestyle changes are not enough, you may need medicines to help control your blood sugar. Knowing about diabetes and how it's treated will help you stay healthy.

**Build Your Team**

You are the most important person on the team. Your doctor, nurse educator and dietitian will help you learn about taking care of yourself. A dentist, eye doctor, doctor, counselor, and someone to help you with an exercise plan are also good team members. Don't forget to include family members and friends who can support you.

The Spanish version of this *Health Facts for You* is #5603s

**Reference**

American Diabetes Association (2019). Standards of Medical Care in Diabetes-2019. *Diabetes Care*. 42(Suppl 1): S1-193.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 5/2019 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#5603