

Be active, eat well, and lower your risk!

What is type 2 diabetes?

Diabetes means that blood glucose (GLOO-kos), also called blood sugar, is too high. Glucose comes from the food we eat and is needed to fuel our bodies. Glucose is also stored in our liver and muscles. Your blood always has some glucose in it because your body needs glucose for energy. An organ called the pancreas (PAN-kree-as) makes insulin (IN-suh-lin). Insulin helps glucose get from your blood into your cells. Cells take the glucose and turn it into energy.

If you have diabetes, the pancreas makes little or no insulin or your cells cannot use insulin very well. Glucose builds up in your blood and cannot get into your cells. If blood glucose stays too high, it can damage many parts of the body such as the heart, eyes, kidneys, and nerves.

If you have type 2 diabetes, you may need to take insulin or pills to help your body's supply of insulin work better. Type 2 used to be called "adult onset diabetes." Now more teens are getting type 2, especially if they are overweight.

be
active

How can I lower my risk for getting type 2 diabetes?



There are several ways to lower your risk:

- Stay at a **healthy weight**.
- Be more **physically active**.
- Choose to eat the right amounts of **healthy foods**.
- Follow the ideas on this tip sheet and share them with your friends and family. They are good for everyone's health.

What puts you at risk?

You are at risk if you:

- are overweight
- don't get enough physical activity
- have a mom, dad, or other close relative who has type 2 diabetes
- are American Indian, Alaska Native, African American, Hispanic/Latino, Asian American, or Pacific Islander



FACT: Eating too much sugar does not cause diabetes.

How will physical activity help?

Like eating well, physical activity can help you feel good. Being physically active may:

- help you control your weight, build lean muscle, and reduce your body fat
- strengthen your bones
- increase flexibility and balance
- improve your self-esteem and mood
- help you sleep better
- help you focus in school
- improve your teamwork skills through sports



Know the warning signs:

If you have type 2 diabetes, you might:

- urinate a lot
- be very thirsty
- lose weight without any reason
- feel tired
- have patches of thick, dark skin that feels like velvet on your neck or under your arms

Some teens do not notice any of these warning signs. They find out they have diabetes when they go to their doctor for a check-up.

What can I do to be more active?

Okay, let's get started:

- **Set small goals at first.** Do not get upset if you cannot do a lot or if you get out of breath at first. Keep moving! Any amount of activity will help. Add more activity each week until you reach your goal.
- **Aim for at least 60 minutes everyday.** You don't have to do it all at once—20 minutes at a time, three times a day is okay, too. There are lots of ways to be active. Go for a walk, ride a bike, dance, play ball, or shoot hoops. Choose what you like best, then do it!