

## What is diabetes?

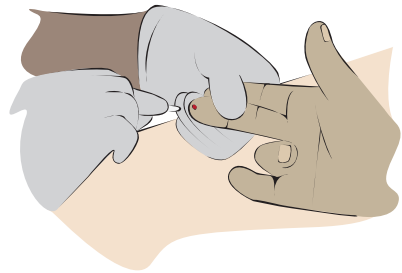
Diabetes is a disease caused by high blood sugar levels (increased blood glucose). Diabetes occurs when insulin, a hormone produced by the pancreas, doesn't act properly or is produced in a smaller volume than necessary. If the increased blood glucose takes place during a long period of time, complications may occur, such as: ocular, renal, cardiac and neurological problems, besides others. Several factors are related with the onset of the disease: genetic predisposition, inappropriate diet, obesity and sedentary lifestyle.

There are two types of diabetes – type 1 and type 2. Type 1 diabetes is a consequence of the destruction of pancreatic cells responsible for the production of insulin. Most often, it happens in children and young adults. Type 2 diabetes may occur in any age, but it's more common after the age of 40 years. This type of diabetes is caused by a defective production and action of insulin and is usually associated with overweight.

## How to know that I have diabetes?

Most people with diabetes have little or no symptoms. The best way to know that you have diabetes is testing your blood glucose level. The normal value is up to 99mg/dL. When blood glucose level is very high, some symptoms may appear, like:

- High urine volume
- Involuntary weight loss
- Excessive appetite
- Excessive thirst
- Malaise



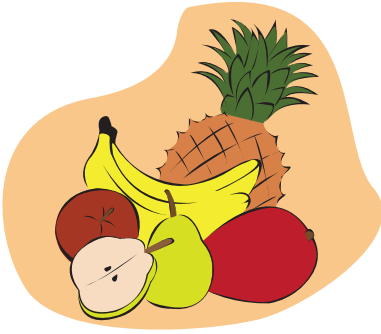
## Is there a cure for Diabetes?

At the present moment, there is not a cure for diabetes, but appropriate and continuous treatment leads to disease control. In order to achieve this goal it's important to take care of the three basic cornerstones: diet, physical exercise, and glucose blood level control.

- Have 6 meals each day - 3 main meals (breakfast, lunch and dinner)

plus 3 snacks between the main meals;

- Avoid food containing too much sugar, like candy, soda and dough (pasta, cake, bread);
- Choose food containing complex carbohydrates: whole food (bread, pasta, rice);
- Choose lean meat, cooked or grilled;
- Choose artificial sweetener instead of sugar;
- Eat foods full of fiber, like greens



and fruits;

- Practice exercises at least 3 times a week, each session lasting 30 to 50 minutes, according to medical advice;
- Lose weight;
- Have appointments with your doctor regularly to manage your disease;
- Take the medication prescribed to you by your doctor, regularly, as they are very important to control your blood glucose level.

## How can I prevent the development of diabetes?

Everyone over the age of 45 years should have the blood glucose tested at least once every 3 years. Sedentary people with smoking habits, who are overweight and have high blood pressure and high cholesterol level should take one blood glucose test every year, independent of the age.

It is possible to prevent the diabetes or delay its onset by having a healthy diet and exercising regularly. A healthy lifestyle is always the best prevention to diabetes.

## Take care of your feet!

Another important complication related to Diabetes is the so-called “diabetic foot”. A poorly controlled disease may lead to the loss of feet sensibility. As a result, your feet may become more vulnerable to wounds. Healing problems associated with diabetes may complicate the situation even more! Therefore, it is important to take good care of your feet. Use comfortable shoes, check your feet daily and, in case there is any alteration, visit your doctor.

Keep your health under control!

