

Diabetes News

A Special Newsletter for
MVP Health Care[®] Members

Issue 2 | 2018



What is Type 2 Diabetes?

Type 2 diabetes happens when your body can't use insulin the right way. Over time, the pancreas can't make enough insulin.

Insulin is a hormone that helps the body's cells use sugar (glucose) for energy. It also helps the body store extra sugar in muscle, fat, and liver cells. Without insulin, this sugar can't get into your cells to do its work. It stays in your blood instead. Your blood sugar level then gets too high.

High blood sugar can harm many parts of the body, such as the eyes, heart, blood vessels, nerves, and kidneys. It can also increase your risk for other health problems (complications).

Type 2 diabetes is different from type 1 diabetes. In type 1 diabetes, the body's immune system destroys the cells that release insulin, so that over time the body can't produce insulin at all. In type 2 diabetes, the body still makes some insulin, but it can't use it the right way.

Potential Complications

When you have type 2 diabetes, your body still makes insulin. But as time goes on, your pancreas may make less and less insulin, which will make it harder to keep your blood sugar in your target range. If your blood sugar gets too high and stays too high for too long, your risk for other health problems increases. Over time, high blood sugar can damage many parts of your body.

Eyes

High blood sugar levels may cause temporary blurred vision. Blurry vision, floaters, or flashes of light may be a sign of diabetic retinopathy, which can cause severe vision loss.

Feet and Skin

You may have less feeling in your feet, which means that you can injure your feet and not know it. Blisters, ingrown toenails, small cuts, or other problems that may seem minor can quickly become more serious. If you develop serious infections or bone and joint deformities, you may need surgery (even amputation) to treat those problems. Common infections can quickly become more serious when you have diabetes.



Heart and Blood Vessels

High blood sugar damages the lining of blood vessels. This can lead to stroke, heart attack, or peripheral arterial disease. Erection problems can be an early warning sign of blood vessel disease and may mean a higher risk of heart disease.

Nerves

High blood sugar levels can damage nerves throughout your body. This damage is called diabetic neuropathy. There are three kinds of diabetic neuropathy:

- **Diabetic peripheral neuropathy.** This is damage to the nerves that sense pain, touch, hot, and cold. This type of nerve damage can lead to a deformity called Charcot foot. It can also lead to other problems that may require amputation.
- **Autonomic neuropathy.** This is damage to nerves that control things like your heartbeat, blood pressure, sweating, digestion, urination, and sexual function.
- **Focal neuropathy.** Most of the time, this affects just one nerve, usually in the wrist, thigh, or foot. It may also affect the nerves of your back and chest and those that control your eye muscles.

Kidneys

The kidneys have many tiny blood vessels that filter waste from your blood. High blood sugar can destroy these blood vessels. You won't have any symptoms of kidney damage until the problem is severe. Then you may notice swelling in your feet or legs or all over your body.

Hearing

High blood sugar can damage the small blood vessels and nerves in the ear, causing hearing loss.

Continued on next page.

Teeth

Gum disease can make it harder to keep blood sugar in a target range. And high blood sugar can cause gum disease, tooth loss, and healing problems in the mouth.

Mental Health

Type 2 diabetes can raise your risk of depression. It may be caused by the stress of dealing with diabetes or by the effects that diabetes has on your body.

Being depressed can make it hard to eat healthy foods and to find the motivation to exercise. All of these things lead to higher blood sugar. By getting help for depression, you'll feel better and may find it easier to stay motivated.

©2018 Healthwise, Incorporated. Reprinted with permission for personal use only. Content shall not be further distributed. This information does not replace the advice of a doctor. Healthwise and MVP disclaim any warranty or liability for your use of this information.

Manage Diabetes with These Important Tests

If you are living with diabetes, there are a number of tests you should have at least yearly to help manage your condition. Talk to your doctor about your results so you can understand what they mean to you.

Dilated Eye Exam

A yearly dilated eye exam by an eye doctor should be done because, over time, diabetes can affect your eyes. This exam should be done even if your medical doctor has examined your eyes.

Hemoglobin A1c (HbA1c)

This test shows your average blood sugar level over the previous 2–3 months. Having a test result of less than 8% can reduce your risk of complications such as kidney damage, blindness, and nerve damage.

Urine Protein

This test checks for early signs of kidney problems which

can be treated and can help prevent future problems.

LDL Level

Sometimes called “bad” cholesterol, it contributes to the formation of plaque in the arteries, which can lead to a heart attack.

Complete Foot Exam

Diabetics are prone to poor circulation, nerve damage, foot ulcers, and infections, which can lead to serious foot problems.

Also, always remember to take all medications as ordered by your doctor!

MVP has online resources available 24 hours a day to help you take charge of your health.

Make informed decisions about your health by using the Healthwise® Knowledgebase—our online Health Encyclopedia. Curious about the medications you take every day? Visit mvphealthcare.com and select *Members*, then *Health & Wellness*. The MVP Healthwise Knowledgebase is your one-stop resource for the latest health information.



MVP Health Care offers a health management program for members living with diabetes. For more information or to see if you qualify, call 1-866-942-7966. MVP's program is based on guidelines for adult diabetes care developed by the American Diabetes Association: A Collaborative Guideline for the Management of the Adult Patient with Diabetes.

Information in this newsletter does not constitute medical advice. If you have questions about your health, talk to your doctor.

Health benefit plans are issued or administered by MVP Health Plan, Inc.; MVP Health Insurance Company; MVP Select Care, Inc.; and MVP Health Services Corp., operating subsidiaries of MVP Health Care, Inc. Not all plans available in all states and counties.



Contact Us

For more information, call

1-866-942-7966

Monday–Friday, 8:30 am–5:00 pm

TTY: **1-800-662-1220**

We value your opinion.

Please fill out a brief, anonymous survey at mvplistsens.com. We will use this information to create a better experience for all of our members. All responses are 100% confidential. The survey only takes a few minutes to complete.



Quick Tips for Being Prepared to Talk to Your Doctor

Patients who have good relationships with their doctors are more satisfied with their care and have better results. Here are some tips to help you and your doctor become better partners in improving your health care:

- Write down your questions before your visit. List the most important ones first to make sure they get asked and answered.
- Bring a “health history” list with you, and keep it up to date.
- Always bring any medications you are taking, including over-the-counter, or a list of those medications (include when and how often you take them) and what strength.
- You might want to bring someone along to help you ask questions and remember the answers.
- Find more information and printable forms at mvphhealthcare.com.

Source: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)



PPSRT STD
US Postage
PAID
MVP Health Care

625 State Street
Schenectady, NY 12305-2111
mvphhealthcare.com

