

Prediabetes

prevention

Risk factors for type 2 diabetes

- ◆ Being 40 years of age or older
- ◆ Having a close relative (parent or sibling) who has type 2 diabetes;
- ◆ Being a member of a high-risk population, such as those of Aboriginal, Hispanic, Asian, South Asian or African descent;
- ◆ Having a history of impaired glucose tolerance or impaired fasting glucose;
- ◆ Having already some evidence of the complications of diabetes, such as eye, nerve or kidney problems;
- ◆ Having heart disease;
- ◆ Having a history of gestational diabetes mellitus;
- ◆ Having high blood pressure;
- ◆ Having high cholesterol;
- ◆ Being overweight, especially around your abdomen.



Wouldn't it be nice if the human body had an "early alert system" that advised us when something was about to go wrong with our health? Prediabetes offers a warning that, if heeded, gives us a chance to change the future.

Prediabetes refers to blood glucose levels that are higher than normal, but not yet high enough to be diagnosed as type 2 diabetes (i.e. a fasting plasma glucose level of 7.0 mmol/L or higher). Although not everyone with prediabetes will develop type 2 diabetes, many people will.

It is important to know if you have prediabetes, because research has shown that some long-term complications associated with diabetes – such as heart disease and nerve damage – may begin during prediabetes.

Risk factors

Like type 2 diabetes, prediabetes can occur without you knowing it, so being aware of your risks and being tested are important. This is especially true if you have prediabetes as part of the “metabolic syndrome,” meaning you also have high blood pressure, high levels of low-density lipoprotein cholesterol (the “bad” cholesterol) and triglycerides, low levels of high-density lipoprotein cholesterol (HDL-C) (the “good” cholesterol) and a tendency toward abdominal obesity.

The risk for type 2 diabetes is higher as you grow older, so the Canadian Diabetes Association recommends screening by testing fasting plasma glucose for everyone once they reach age 40 and every three years after that. If you have risk factors that increase the likelihood of developing type 2 diabetes, you should be tested more frequently or start regular screening earlier.

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