What is Diabetes?

Good News about Diabetes

The good news is that you can control diabetes. If you have diabetes, talk with your health care team about things you can do to stay healthy.

Write down the name and telephone number of your primary care doctor or nurse:

_____
Primary Care Doctor or Nurse

_____
Telephone number

Diabetes is a condition where there is too much sugar (glucose) in your blood. If uncontrolled, diabetes can cause blindness, kidney failure, heart disease, and loss of toes, feet and even legs.

There are three main types of diabetes.

Type 1 Diabetes

- Type 1 diabetes usually comes on very suddenly
- The body stops making insulin (a hormone in your body)
- Type 1 diabetes is controlled with insulin shots, healthy eating, and physical activity
- Type 1 diabetes can happen at any age, but usually occurs in children and young adults
- Five to 10% of people with diabetes have type 1

Type 2 Diabetes

- Type 2 diabetes comes on slowly—you may not have any symptoms of the disease
- The body does not make enough insulin or cannot use the insulin it makes
- Type 2 diabetes can sometimes be controlled with healthy eating and being physically active
- People with type 2 diabetes may also need diabetes pills or insulin shots
- Type 2 diabetes can happen at any age, but is found mostly in people over age 45 who are overweight
- 90% of people with diabetes have type 2

Gestational Diabetes

Some women get diabetes during pregnancy. This is called gestational diabetes. It usually goes away after the baby is born, but these women have a greater risk of getting type 2 diabetes later in life. Children born to mothers with gestational diabetes are at risk for obesity and type 2 diabetes later in life.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services

Mass Health PCC Plan

Massachusetts Diabetes Prevention & Control Program
Department of Public Health

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