

Diabetes

The best way to deal with diabetes is to learn as much as you can about taking care of yourself.

What is diabetes?

- Diabetes is a disease that keeps the body from either making enough insulin or using insulin properly. Insulin helps your body turn the food you eat into energy. If your body produces little or no insulin, or does not use the insulin it makes, you may have diabetes.
- If not controlled, diabetes can cause kidney failure, heart attack, stroke, blindness, foot ulcers, and gum diseases.

Types of diabetes

- **Type 1:** The body makes little or no insulin. You will need shots to control this type of diabetes.
- **Type 2:** The body makes insulin but does not know how to use it properly.
- **Gestational:** Women may get diabetes while they are pregnant. This type of diabetes goes away after the baby is born.

Do you have diabetes?

You may have diabetes if you have any of these signs:

- Being very thirsty or hungry
- Urinating a lot
- A sudden loss of weight for no reason
- Blurry vision from time to time
- Feeling tired or sleepy
- Tingling skin

(continued)



How to control diabetes

- **Eating healthily will help keep your blood sugar levels under control.** Ask your doctor for help with a meal plan that is right for you.
- **Test your blood sugar every day.**
The normal blood sugar range before a meal is 70–130 mg/dl. The normal blood sugar range for 1–2 hours after a meal is 70–180 mg/dl. Ask your doctor for your recommended blood glucose range.
- **Exercise regularly.** Being active can lower your blood sugar levels, help you lose weight, and keep your heart healthy.
- **Take your medicine.** Along with a good diet, you may need to take insulin shots or pills to help control your diabetes. Always take your medicine as your doctor tells you.
- **Foot care.** You should check your feet every day. Diabetes may cause foot problems that can lead to the loss of toes, feet and legs.
- **Eye care.** Visit your eye doctor once a year. Diabetes may cause problems with your eyes and vision that can lead to blindness.
- **Dental care.** Visit your dentist every six months for a checkup and cleaning. Gum disease and other mouth problems are common in people with diabetes.



CalViva Health members:

To learn more, call the Health Education Information Line at **1-800-804-6074 (TTY: 711)** or log in to **www.CalVivaHealth.org**.