DIABETES

Diabetes Type 2 | Part 2

How to monitor glucose levels

If diabetes is severe, you will get a glucometer which can measure the glucose levels in a drop of blood, usually from the fingertips or forearm.

When should I check my glucose levels?

You should check your glucose level before meals, and again 2 hours after finishing the meal. When uncontrolled, you should check every meal this way until things look better. Then check before and 2 hours after one meal a day. Alternate meal times, one day breakfast, the next lunch, etc.

What is the goal?

Before meal glucose should be around 70-130. This is when your are temporarily fasting.

Two hours after a meal you should be less than 160, lower for tighter control. This is important to see if your body is able to control the sugars you just consumed.

Your next visit

By now you should be really changing your diet to gain control. Remember, it's not a disease you pick up, it's not a cancer, it's mostly due to what you eat. It's also very deadly so you must take this very seriously.

What are we looking for?

You will need a yearly eye exam to check for disease to the retina that can lead to blindness. Please ask your eye doctor to forward their notes to our clinic with every visit, at least yearly.

You will need a foot exam, called a monofilament test. We're looking for nerve damage or vascular changes. You may lose sensation in your foot from diabetes and we'll be checking your ability to sense a small monofilament as it touches your foot in several areas. Nothing sharp, just light pressure. This is important to prevent foot ulcers and possible amputations.

Kidney evaluation to test for traces of protein in the urine that may be caused by diabetes. We'll check both microalbumin and larger protein in the urine. You'll need to take a blood pressure medication to prevent the kidney damage even if you have normal blood pressure.

Why does glucose run higher than expected?

There are many causes for high glucose

- You are resistant to insulin and cannot manage your glucose levels.

- You ate too many simple carbohydrates with the meal

- Colds or illnesses will cause high glucose levels

- Stress with family, school, work can cause high glucose readings.

- Lack of exercise.

- Inadequate medication.

What should I watch out for?

High glucose can cause several symptoms:

- Frequent urination

- Increased thirst

- Fatigue

- Vision changes

Low glucose is also dangerous. Some medications can dramatically reduce glucose levels. Some causes are:

- Sulfonylurea (i.e. Amaryl) medications can lower glucose

- Too much insulin can provoke low glucose.

- Skipping meals. It's important to eat regularly.

Other routine medical needs

You will need a regular eye doctor. This can be by an Ophthalmologist or Optometrist. They will check your eyes yearly for the presence of disease related to diabetes called retinopathy. They'll also check your eye pressure. Vision screening and glasses may not be covered by your medical insurance, but the diabetic exam should be.

Your blood pressure will be monitored at every visit. The goal is to keep your blood pressure below 130/80 to avoid complications.

Americans consume an average of 66 pounds of added sugar each year.