

# UNDERSTANDING TYPE 2 DIABETES

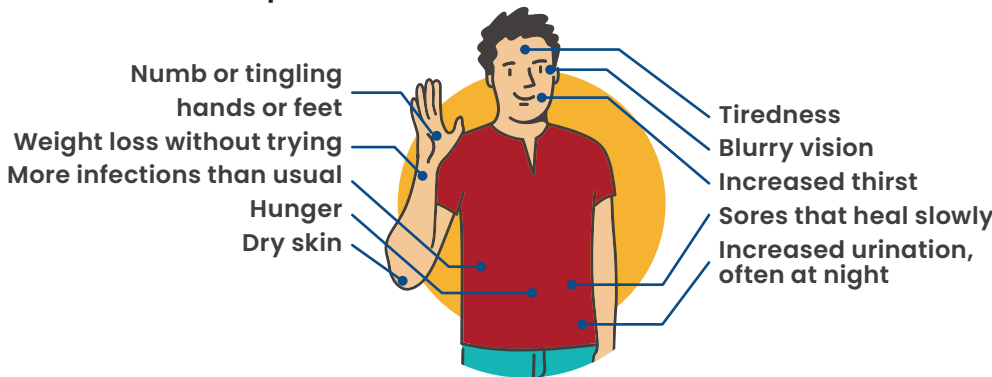
## What is Type 2 diabetes?

Type 2 diabetes is the most common form of diabetes. If you have diabetes, your body does not use insulin properly, which causes your blood glucose (sugar) levels to rise higher than normal. Over time, high blood sugar levels can cause serious health problems.

## What are the symptoms of diabetes?

Type 2 diabetes symptoms often develop over the course of several years and can be difficult to notice. If you are experiencing any of the symptoms below, please check with your health-care provider and have your blood sugar tested:

## Common Diabetes Complications



*Lifestyle Changes are the key to preventing or delaying Type 2 diabetes. Lifestyle changes include losing weight if you are overweight, eating a healthy diet and getting regular physical activity.*

## Understanding Your Risks

You may be at risk for Type 2 diabetes if you:

- ✓ Have prediabetes
- ✓ Are overweight
- ✓ Are 45 years or older
- ✓ Have a family history of type 2 diabetes
- ✓ Are not physically active
- ✓ Have had gestational diabetes or given birth to a baby who weighed over 9 pounds
- ✓ Are an African American, Hispanic or Latino, American Indian or Alaska Native person. Some Pacific Islanders and Asian American people are also at higher risk.

## Managing Diabetes



Work with your health-care team to set and maintain healthy living goals



Stay current with your health screenings and appointments



Take your medication(s) as prescribed



Check your blood sugar level regularly and keep a log as directed



Consult a registered dietitian or health-care professional to develop a well-balanced diet including fresh fruit and vegetables, whole grains and lean proteins like eggs, fish and poultry



Limit unhealthy foods including sugared-sweetened beverages like pop or juice, carbohydrates like breads, pasta, rice or packaged snack foods and trans fats including margarine, creamers and fried foods



Stop or avoid smoking or using tobacco products



Exercise at least 30 minutes per day and stay active.\*

*\*Always consult a health-care professional before beginning an exercise program.*

## Partnering with Your Health-Care Team

To help manage your diabetes, it is important to stay current with all of your appointments and proactively work with your health-care team.

### Every Medical Visit

- Foot exam
- Blood pressure check
- Weight/BMI (body mass index) review
- Medication review

### Every Year

- Diabetic eye exam\*
- Cholesterol panel
- Flu shot
- Kidney function tests (urine AND blood)

### As Directed by Your Provider

- A1C test\*\*
- Pneumonia vaccine
- Breast cancer screening
- Colorectal cancer screening
- Cervical cancer screening

#### \*Diabetic Eye Exam

Patients with diabetes should complete a dilated eye exam with an ophthalmologist or optometrist at least once a year. During the exam, your pupils will be dilated so that the provider can review any changes in your blood vessels. 80% of patients who have diabetes for at least 15 years have some blood vessel damage to the retina and patients with untreated diabetes are 25 times more at risk for blindness.

#### \*\*A1C Test

An A1C test result reflects your average blood sugar for the past two-to-three months. It can be used to both detect and monitor diabetes.

If you have pre-diabetes or diabetes, an A1C should be completed at least once per year and can help you:

- Determine whether a treatment plan is working
- Confirm self-testing blood sugar result levels

A high A1C level indicates poor blood sugar control, which increases your risk of diabetic complications. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says the goal for most people with diabetes is 7% or less. Your



health-care team can help you set a goal based on your specific condition and health plan.

#### Diagnosing Prediabetes or Diabetes

