



BETTERSAFE

WELCOA'S ONLINE BULLETIN FOR YOUR FAMILY'S SAFETY

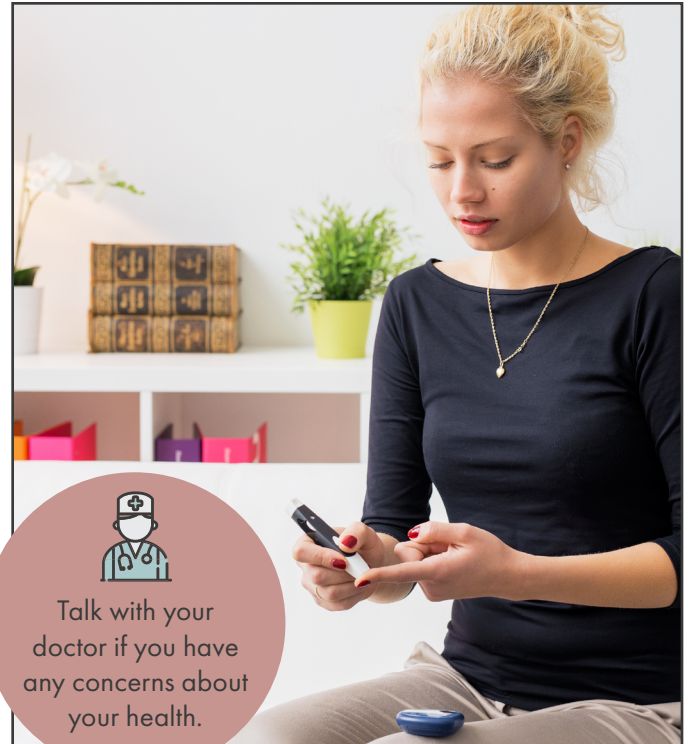
UNDERSTAND YOUR DIABETES RISK

November is American Diabetes Month, which makes it a great time to learn more about this chronic condition that more than 34 million Americans are living with and understand the risks of developing it. Diabetes is a long-lasting health condition that affects how your body turns food into energy.

Most of the food you eat is broken down into sugar (also called glucose) and released into your bloodstream. When your blood sugar goes up, it signals your pancreas to release insulin. Insulin acts like a key to let the blood sugar into your body's cells for use as energy. If you have diabetes, your body either doesn't make enough insulin or can't use the insulin it makes as well as it should. When there isn't enough insulin or cells stop responding to insulin, too much blood sugar stays in your bloodstream. Over time, that can cause serious health problems, such as heart disease, vision loss, and kidney disease.

LEARN YOUR RISK

Out of the 34 million Americans who have diabetes one in five of them don't even know they have it. That's because there are often no symptoms, or symptoms like frequent thirst, hunger, and/or urination are easily dismissed. It's important to understand the risks of diabetes and know when you should get tested.



Talk with your doctor if you have any concerns about your health.

According to health experts, you're at higher risk for developing diabetes if you:

- » Have prediabetes (a health condition where blood sugar levels are higher than normal, but not high enough yet to be diagnosed as type 2 diabetes)
- » Are overweight
- » Are 45 years or older
- » Have a parent, brother, or sister with type 2 diabetes
- » Are physically active less than 3 times a week
- » Have ever had gestational diabetes (diabetes during pregnancy) or given birth to a baby who weighed more than 9 pounds
- » Are African American, Hispanic/Latino American, American Indian, or Alaska Native (some Pacific Islanders and Asian Americans are also at higher risk)

If you're at high risk or feel like you might have diabetes, talk with your healthcare provider about getting tested. Diabetes can be tested and diagnosed with a simple blood draw. While there is no cure yet for diabetes, early detection, diagnosis, and treatment may improve the chances of returning blood sugar levels to a normal range.

TAKE STEPS TO PROTECT YOUR HEALTH

Although some factors like age and family history can't be controlled, there's a lot you can do to lower your chances of developing diabetes. You can prevent or delay type 2 diabetes with simple, proven lifestyle changes such as maintaining a healthy weight, eating a nutritious diet, and getting regular physical activity. Regular visits with your healthcare provider to talk about risk factors and your lifestyle can also help keep you on the right track.

Did You Know:

- » More than 34 million people in the United States have diabetes, and 1 in 5 of them don't know they have it.
- » More than 88 million US adults—over a third—have prediabetes, and more than 84% of them don't know they have it.
- » Diabetes is the 7th leading cause of death in the United States (and that might be under-reported).
- » In the last 20 years, the number of adults diagnosed with diabetes has more than doubled as the American population has aged and become more overweight or obese.

Source: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Signs & Symptoms of Diabetes

- » Unexplained hunger and fatigue
- » Dry mouth and itchy skin
- » Unexplained increased thirst and urination
- » Blurred vision

