

Annual Doctor Visit for Pre-Diabetes

What is pre-diabetes? A person with more sugar in their blood than normal, but not enough to be diagnosed with diabetes, has pre-diabetes.

What are some risks of having pre-diabetes? People who have pre-diabetes often develop diabetes within 10 years and have twice the risk of heart disease such as high blood pressure, stroke and heart attack.

What signs and symptoms should I watch for? Pre-diabetes is often a silent disease without any obvious symptoms. Sometimes the body will over-correct and cause low blood sugar. People feel dizzy or get cold sweats when this happens. The best way to know if you have pre-diabetes is by an oral glucose tolerance test. Your blood is tested two hours after eating or drinking sugar to see how well your body can get your blood sugar back to normal.

How did I get pre-diabetes? Your parents, your lifestyle, and the world around you affect your risk for getting pre-diabetes. You have no control over the genes you inherit from your parents. You have some control over the amount of stress around you and the environment you live in. You have a lot of control over the foods you eat, the amount of exercise and sleep you get, and the healthy habits you practice.

What can I do for pre-diabetes? Focus on improving the areas you have control over and you may be able to prevent diabetes, heart attack, and stroke entirely. Lifestyle changes have been shown to be the best prescription to prevent the progression from pre-diabetes to diabetes.

- If you are overweight, lose at least 5 to 10 percent of your body weight.
- Improve your diet with healthier food choices.
- Add 30 minutes of mild to moderate physical activity to each day, on average.
- Add more fiber to your diet.
- Adopt healthy habits such as quitting smoking, drink less alcohol, and reduce stress in your life.
- Get a good night's sleep regularly.

Why is it important to have my health check-up and tests done? It is important to retest your blood sugar at least once a year to make sure you have not progressed to diabetes. You should also ask your doctor if they think you are at risk for other diseases such as high cholesterol and high blood pressure.

How should I get ready for my next appointment? Bring a list of medications and vitamin supplements you take to your doctor's appointment. Some medications bought without a prescription such as herbals supplements and vitamins can change your blood sugar. Don't stop taking any prescription medications without talking to your doctor first.

References: prediabetes.www.diabetes.org. Accessed 10/21/2019