

PREVENTING DIABETES

WHAT IS DIABETES?

- Diabetes is a chronic disease characterized by elevated levels of blood sugar in the blood, which occurs as a result of the failure of the pancreas to produce sufficient quantity of insulin, or when the body is unable to use insulin effectively.
- Insulin is a hormone produced by the pancreatic gland that helps the body cells to utilize the sugar (glucose) in the blood in order to produce energy for the body.

WHAT ARE THE TYPES OF DIABETES?

- **Type 1 Diabetes:** It occurs when there is a lack of pancreatic secretions of insulin, or if the amount of secreted insulin is less than needed by the body. This usually affects people below the age of 30 and it can affect any age. This type of diabetes will require insulin injection.
- **Type 2 Diabetes:** It is more common among diabetic people and more than 90% of them are affected by this type. This type occurs when the pancreas does not secrete sufficient amount of insulin or when the cells start having resistance to the uptake of insulin.
- Type II diabetes is preceded by a **pre-diabetes phase**, which might last for years and is characterized by the resistance of the body cells to insulin due to obesity and genetic factors. Studies have shown that intervention at this stage with a healthy lifestyle including healthy diet and active lifestyle, in addition to medications can prevent more than half of the cases.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF DIABETES?

- Frequent urination.
- Thirst and dry mouth.
- Severe fatigue, loss of energy.
- Hunger.
- Sudden loss of weight.
- Blurred vision
- Recurrent infections.

WHO IS AT RISK TO HAVE DIABETES?

The following risk factors may increase your chance of having type 2 diabetes:

- **Family history** of type 2 diabetes.
- **Age:** People **over 40** are more likely to develop diabetes than people younger than 40.
- **Ethnic origin:** Family background from Asia, Middle East, or Arabian Gulf are at higher risk of having diabetes.
- **Overweight:** especially if you have excess belly fat.



- **Sedentary life style:** being physically inactive increases the likeliness for developing type2 diabetes.
- **High blood pressure and high cholesterol levels.**
- **History of gestational diabetes** (diabetes during pregnancy) or giving birth to a baby weighing more than 4 kilograms.

WHAT ARE THE COMPLICATIONS OF DIABETES?

If blood sugar is not controlled well, it may cause the following complications over a long period of time:

- **Mouth problems:** such as gum disease or problems with teeth.
- **Heart and blood vessel diseases:** such as heart attack, stroke, and peripheral artery disease (poor blood flow in the feet and legs)
- **Eye disease:** decreased vision and in some cases, blindness.
- **Kidney disease:** the kidneys may not work as well or may stop working.
- **Foot problems:** such as infections and sores, and in some cases, amputation.

HOW TO PREVENT DIABETES?

1. Healthy Diet

- Eat regular meals based mainly on low carbohydrate foods.
- Avoid saturated fats (found in meat and dairy products), as follows:
 - ✓ Choose pieces of red meat and remove visible fat.
 - ✓ Grill the meat or have it boiled or steamed instead of fried or roasted.
- Choose low-fat dairy products (for example skimmed or semi-skimmed milk, low fat yogurt and cream).
- Eat fish regularly.
- Check the food labels (some may contain little fat but more sugar than you think).
- Eat 4 servings of fruit and 5 servings of vegetables per day.
- Use less salt in food
- Drink between 1-2 liters of water a day.

2. Weight Loss

- If you are overweight, your body cells will increase resistance against secreted insulin, so your body will not be able to use insulin as required, which means that diabetes control will not be ideal as required.
- Weight loss is achieved through changing your food and drink habits, and increasing physical activity.
- Remember that simple changes may represent a real difference and long-term benefits.



3. Have active life that contains regular physical activity

- Exercise – Benefits and importance
 - ✓ Reduces and regulates blood sugar and blood lipids
 - ✓ Increase disease control which will reduce amount of medication used
 - ✓ Helps to strengthen the body and muscles
 - ✓ Reduces the body's resistance to insulin
 - ✓ Improves the psychological state
- The basic rules of exercise:
 - ✓ Ideally, you should be active for at least 2½ hours a week (30min per day). Include activities that raise your breathing and heart rates and that strengthen your muscles.
 - ✓ You should begin a sports program gradually and then increase the duration and intensity of exercise to reach the target level according to each individual.
 - ✓ You should begin your sports session with warm-up exercises for 5 to 10 minutes.
 - ✓ End the session with relaxation exercises for 5 to 10 minutes.
 - ✓ You must rest between 30 to 90 seconds when needed.
 - ✓ Do not exercise if suffering from a sports-related injury.

4. Avoid emotional stress.

5. Avoid all types of tobacco.

For inquiries and more information:

Please do not hesitate to contact: _____

Telephone number: _____

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