

## Healthy Living: Diabetes (1 page)<sup>1</sup>

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### What is diabetes?

Diabetes is a condition in which the body has trouble making or using insulin. Insulin controls the amount of glucose (sugar) in our blood. The result is high blood glucose.

#### Over time, high blood glucose can result in:



vision loss or blindness,



high blood pressure and heart disease,



damage to blood vessels and nerves, like those in your hands and feet, and



damage to the kidneys

#### Visit your doctor if you have any of the following:

- a need to urinate often (even at night)
- constant thirst or hunger
- weight loss that cannot be explained
- dry or itchy skin
- skin infections
- slow healing of cuts
- numbness or tingling in feet or hands
- blurry vision

#### Can diabetes be cured?

In most cases of diabetes, there is no cure. But diabetes can be controlled. You can do this with a proper diet and regular exercise. Some people also may need insulin injections or medication.



#### To control diabetes:

- ✓ Lose weight, if you are overweight.
- ✓ Be physically active every day.
- ✓ Have your eyes and your blood pressure checked regularly.
- ✓ Have a health professional check your feet at least once a year; check them yourself every day.
- ✓ Have your teeth cleaned at least twice a year.
- ✓ Don't smoke.
- ✓ Follow a healthy diet: eat less fat, sweets, and sodium; choose foods with fiber.

If you have diabetes, a registered dietitian (RD) can design a diet plan that is right for you.

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