



DIABETES

Today, there are about 25.8 million people living in the U.S. with diabetes. Of these, 18.8 million have been diagnosed: while the remaining are unaware they have the disease ^(1,2). Diabetes is the seventh leading cause of death in the U.S.

Diabetes affects the body's ability to use glucose, a form of sugar that comes from foods we eat. To use glucose, the body needs the hormone insulin to change glucose into energy. If you have diabetes, your body does not make or use insulin efficiently; this results in high blood sugar levels ⁽³⁾.

Diabetics are at risk for heart disease, stroke, blindness, chronic kidney disease, and amputations. Below are some common symptoms of diabetes ⁽¹⁾:

- Frequent urination
- Feeling hungry or thirsty all the time
- Losing weight without trying
- Feeling tired and irritable
- Blurred vision
- Slow healing cuts or bruises
- Tingling or numbness in the hands or feet

Some key factors that may increase your risk for diabetes include ^(2,3):

- Obesity
- Lack of exercise and poor diet
- High blood pressure
- Family history of diabetes
- Certain ethnic groups (African American, Native American, Hispanic American)
- Gestational diabetes during a previous pregnancy
- Giving birth to a baby over 9 pounds

There are two blood tests to determine whether someone has diabetes. The Fasting Plasma Glucose Test (FPG) or an Oral Glucose Tolerance Test (OGTT). The American Diabetes Association recommends the FPG test because it is easier, faster and less expensive to administer ⁽¹⁾.

If you are concerned about symptoms you are experiencing, please consult your doctor. For more information on diabetes, please visit the following web-links:

Diabetes Information:

- [All About Diabetes](#)
- [Diabetic Diet: Meal Planning](#)
- [Diabetes Interactive Tutorial](#)
- [Diabetes Risk Calculator](#)

References:

1. [American Diabetes Association](#)
2. [The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)
3. [U.S. National Library of Medicine and the National Institutes of Health](#)

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