



MEET

Jamie Graham

Jamie is a Logistics Coordinator at Presstran Industries in St. Thomas, Canada. Jamie's struggle with slow healing injuries took a surprising turn when he discovered that he had type 2 diabetes.

Back in the fall of 2023, Jamie was recovering from multiple physical injuries: back pain, tennis elbow, and a torn knee ligament. At that time, he weighed 330 pounds and had been diagnosed with high blood pressure. Even with physical therapy, Jamie's injuries were not healing as expected.

In April 2024, Jamie raised his concerns about his slow healing to his doctor and was sent for blood work. To his surprise, his results revealed that he had type 2 diabetes. Jamie's doctor explained that inflammation from diabetes was slowing down the healing process and recommended blood sugar medication. With his wife's support, Jamie started medication and made lifestyle changes. Together, they researched diabetic dietary guidelines. They switched from refined to whole grains and cut down their sugar intake. Jamie's wife cooked new healthy recipes, and he lost weight. He started exercising and tracked his progress with an app, aiming for 5 hours each week. Jamie shared that having a strong support system was essential to maintaining his habit changes.

By the summer, Jamie's blood sugar average had dropped back to a normal range. His knee pain decreased, his elbow and back pain resolved, and his average blood pressure dropped. Jamie still requires medication as his body gradually adjusts to the weight loss. However, his doctor noted that he could potentially stop taking the medication if he maintains his new habits.

Jamie is motivated to keep going. He said, "I didn't think I would be able to go on a run when the doctor and I were talking back in March and April." Cut to today, where he proudly shared that he has completed a 5km run. Nine months in, with continued support from friends and family, Jamie maintains healthy blood pressure and weight, noting he is "finally feeling the benefits."

Jamie believes that no one can rely on medication alone to fully manage type 2 diabetes. For anyone diagnosed, Jamie suggests that you do your own research on the condition.

He found power in understanding the full effects of diabetes and learning which lifestyle changes make the biggest impact. With the right habits, social support, and medical assistance, change is possible.

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DID YOU know?

A dietician can be a vital part of your diabetes care team.

The foods you eat can either stabilize your blood sugar or cause dangerous spikes and drops. That is why a registered dietician is a key part of a diabetes management team. They can provide personalized nutrition education and design meal plans to help balance blood sugar. They also support clients to manage weight if needed. A dietician can help you dodge confusing food advice and stay on course toward well-managed diabetes.

Book a consultation and transform your meals into powerful tools for better health! Check your benefits plan to see what coverage you can access.



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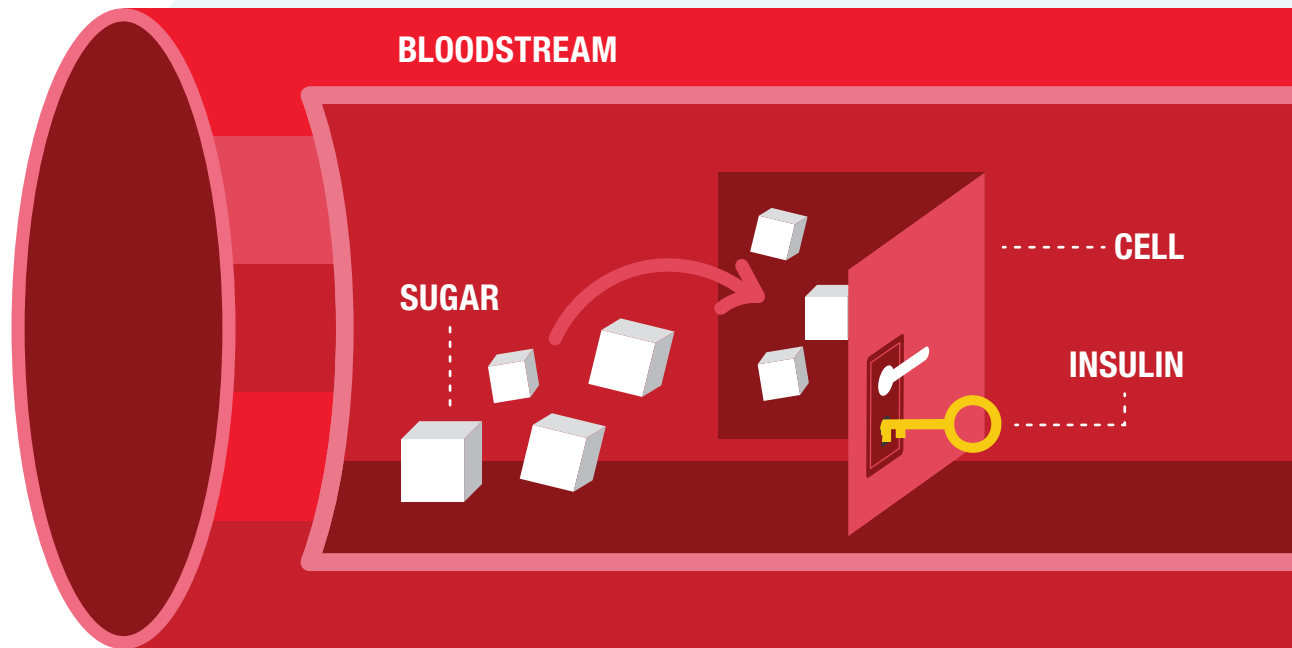
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Diabetes

UNLOCKED

The International Diabetes Association reports that 10.5% of the global population has diabetes, but almost half of adults with diabetes are undiagnosed. This chronic disease affects many lives, but do you know how diabetes works?

Keep reading to find out!

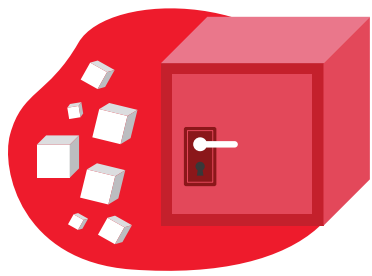


How does the body control blood sugar?

After we eat, the carbohydrates in our food are broken down into simple sugars that enter our blood. The pancreas notices a rise in blood sugar and releases the hormone, insulin. We can think of our body's liver and muscle cells like storage units, and insulin as the key which unlocks them. When a cell is unlocked by insulin, sugar moves from the bloodstream into the cell to be stored for later use. As the sugar moves out of the bloodstream, into the cell, our blood sugar levels lower back to normal.

When the system fails:

Diabetes happens when the sugar processing pathway is disrupted. Let's learn how disruptions cause different types of diabetes.

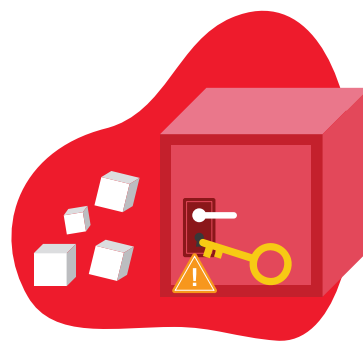


TYPE 1 DIABETES

The immune system has mistakenly attacked the pancreas, so it cannot make insulin! Without insulin to unlock cells, sugar remains in the bloodstream. Type 1 diabetes often appears in adolescents; however, it can develop at any age. Those diagnosed need to take insulin to keep their blood sugar regulated.

PREDIABETES

Prediabetes is like the body's warning signal, acting as a "check engine" light. The insulin keys may not fit right anymore, or the pancreas might not be meeting demands for insulin production. At this stage, blood sugar levels are starting to rise. Without intervention, the system will continue down the path to diabetes. For those with prediabetes, long-term lifestyle changes can restore average blood sugar to normal.



TYPE 2 DIABETES

Almost 90% of diabetes cases are type 2, which develops gradually over time. It can happen when cells stop using the body's insulin properly, which is known as insulin resistance. A type 2 diagnosis could also mean that the pancreas is slowing down and not producing enough insulin. Either way, it becomes nearly impossible to maintain healthy blood sugar levels. Typically, a combination of lifestyle changes and medication are needed to help regulate blood sugar.



GESTATIONAL DIABETES

This type begins and typically ends during pregnancy. It is triggered by hormonal changes in pregnancy that cause blood sugar abnormalities. Treatment varies depending on severity. Although gestational diabetes often goes away after delivery, it does increase the risk for developing type 2 diabetes in the future.

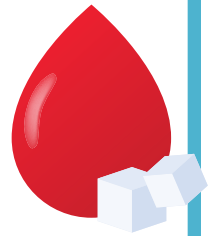


How does SUSTAINED HIGH BLOOD SUGAR harm the body?

To function normally, the body requires sugar in the blood. However, too much sugar consistently can cause harm throughout the body over time.

High blood sugar from diabetes gradually damages nerves, blood vessels, tissues, and organs. Excess sugar in the blood creates harmful chemicals, damaging the nerve cells. These changes can lead to neuropathy with symptoms of numbness and pain in the limbs. High blood sugar also slows wound healing, which increases the risk for lower limb amputation due to infection. People living with diabetes, diagnosed or not, are three times more likely to develop cardiovascular disease. This is because high blood sugar stiffens and inflames the arteries. If blood vessels become damaged, the risk for heart attack, stroke, kidney failure, and vision loss increase.

The rates of diabetes are climbing in many countries around the world. Prevention and management of all types of diabetes should not be taken lightly. Stay informed to maintain and restore your health regardless of whether you have diabetes!



So, You Have Type 2 Diabetes. Now What?

MYTH:

“I can go on medication and **not** change my lifestyle.”

FACT:

Most people diagnosed need to change some habits to control their blood sugar long-term.

MYTH:

“I will need to take insulin.”

FACT:

Insulin is needed to treat type 1 diabetes. With type 2 diabetes, non-insulin medications and lifestyle changes are typically tried first, but insulin may be needed in some cases.

MYTH:

“If I start medication, I can never stop.”

FACT:

Medication helps people quickly and consistently achieve healthier blood sugar levels. Some people that make big habit changes after diagnosis can stop or reduce their medications once their blood sugar stabilizes.

Regardless of whether you plan to start, stop, or stay on diabetes medication, it is important to learn how to manage your blood sugar. Focus on these areas of your health to get started!

1



FOOD

What you eat directly affects your blood sugar. Do your research and switch to mostly diabetic-friendly foods.

- Choose foods from the following categories often: leafy greens, lean proteins, healthy fats like seeds and fish, and high-fibre carbohydrates like whole grains and legumes.
- Keep your sodium intake below 2,300 mg per day to protect your heart health.
- Limit sweets, high-fat foods, and alcohol where possible.

2



MOVEMENT

Exercise makes your body more sensitive to insulin, which helps stabilize your blood sugar for around 24 hours after a workout.

- Aim for at least 150 minutes of medium to high intensity exercise each week like brisk walking, running, or high-movement sports.

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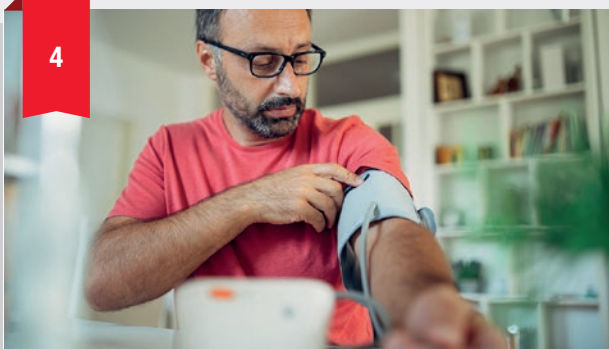


WEIGHT

Did you know that excess belly fat can worsen insulin resistance?

- For people with excess body fat, losing even 5% of bodyweight can benefit blood sugar.
- For people with obesity, sustaining a larger weight loss will make you less likely to require diabetes medication.

4



BLOOD PRESSURE

High blood pressure increases many health risks that come with diabetes.

- Check your blood pressure regularly and discuss treatment options with your doctor if it is consistently above 125/85.

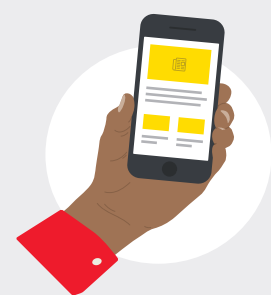
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SLEEP

Poor sleep is linked to more stress and increased blood sugar levels in those with diabetes.

- If you struggle to get 7-9 hours of sleep or are often tired throughout the day, consider focusing on your sleep routine and discussing it with your doctor.



Learning to manage type 2 diabetes takes time, but it is possible. For advice on managing blood sugar, search for diabetes organizations in your area or ask for resources from your healthcare team.

MENTAL HEALTH CORNER

Diabetes Does Not Discriminate

Diabetes affects millions of people worldwide. Unfortunately, misconceptions continue to harm the health of those diagnosed.

Some people assume that to get diabetes, you must eat poorly and not exercise. This is not true. Many factors related to diabetes are outside of our control. It is impossible to know why one person has diabetes and another does not. These assumptions can delay people seeking diagnosis and receiving life-saving treatment because they fear of being judged. Misconceptions can worsen feelings of anxiety and depression for those diagnosed. People with diabetes deserve respect and privacy, so it is best to not make assumptions.

Many people believe that medication is an easy fix for diabetes. This can downplay the negative health impacts of having diabetes. It also minimizes the role of healthy lifestyle habits in managing diabetes.

If people with prediabetes believe medication is an easy fix, they may be less motivated to try and avoid diabetes. As well, those diagnosed may ignore the need for lifestyle changes, raising the risk of complications.

The way we think and speak about diabetes diagnoses and treatments impacts everyone. A diagnosis is an important matter and should be approached with understanding, not judgment. Remember, diabetes can affect anyone.



WHAT IS YOUR TYPE 2 DIABETES RISK?

REMEMBER:

Lower risk does not mean no risk.

When it comes to assessing your risk for developing type 2 diabetes, many elements are at play.

There are some risk factors you have no control over like your age, ethnicity, and family history. Alternatively, there are many risk factors that you can modify like your physical activity, bodyweight, blood pressure, cholesterol levels, and cigarette smoking.

HOW RISK FACTORS BUILD UP



Imagine that each person has a bucket, and each risk factor adds water to that bucket. If someone's bucket overflows, then they get type 2 diabetes.

This means that the more risk factors you have, the more your bucket fills up, making you more likely to get type 2 diabetes.

By managing your controllable risk factors, you remove some water from your bucket, making it less likely to overflow.

ASSESS THEIR RISK!



Meet CRAIG

Craig is 46 and his sister has type 2 diabetes. Craig has high blood pressure and obesity. He eats a big bag of chips most evenings and occasionally plays basketball.

High risk: Craig cannot control his family history and rising age. However, without improving his food and exercise habits to better manage his weight and blood pressure, he is at high risk for developing type 2 diabetes.



Meet JULIE

Julie is 57. She manages her weight well by eating lots of healthy foods and going on brisk walks daily. None of Julie's family members have diabetes, but she does smoke cigarettes.

Lower risk: Although Julie is getting older and smokes, she keeps her risk of diabetes lower by eating well and exercising regularly.



Meet JAY

Jay is 64 and his mother had type 2 diabetes. He developed prediabetes, so he started eating vegetables and limiting sugary treats. He joined a badminton club and now goes regularly. Since making changes, his blood tests show that his blood sugar is stable.

Medium risk: Although Jay was diagnosed with prediabetes, his habit changes greatly reduced his diabetes risk.



Meet HARPER

Harper is 21 and has no family with diabetes. She is a healthy weight, but she struggles to sleep and limit overeating. Harper walks a lot as a barista but does not exercise otherwise.

Lower risk: Harper is young and has no family history of diabetes. However, without managing her modifiable risk factors like eating, sleep, and exercise, her risk will increase over time.



Speak to your doctor about your risk factors to determine how often you should get your blood sugar tested.



Low Sugar BANANA BREAD

Enjoy banana bread without the blood sugar spike! This diabetes-friendly recipe offers a delicious, low-sugar alternative to the classic treat.

SERVES
12

PREP TIME
15 min.

TOTAL TIME
1 hour

WHAT MAKES THIS DIABETES FRIENDLY?

- This recipe has no added sugars. Only natural sources are used for sweetness.
- Some of the oil is replaced with applesauce, which reduces the overall fat content while maintaining moisture.
- Using whole wheat flour increases the fibre content, which slows digestion and helps control blood sugar.

COOKING TIPS:

- Make sure the bananas are extra ripe for more sweetness and moisture.
- Be careful not to overmix the final batter. Overmixing can lead to a denser loaf.
- Add a ¼ cup of chopped walnuts for an extra crunch and boost in omega-3 fatty acids!

INGREDIENTS

- Cooking spray
- 2 extra ripe bananas (mashed)
- 2 eggs
- ¼ CUP vegetable oil
- ¼ CUP unsweetened applesauce
- ¼ TSP vanilla extract
- 1 ½ CUPS whole wheat flour
- 1 TSP baking soda
- ½ TSP cinnamon
- ¼ TSP salt

NUTRITIONAL FACTS

Per serving (1/12th of the loaf)

138 calories	16.4g carbohydrates
7.3g total Fat	2.4g fibre
1.2g saturated fat	3.1g sugar
27mg cholesterol	3.5g protein
151mg sodium	150mg potassium

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C).
2. Lightly coat a 9x5 inch loaf pan with cooking spray.
3. In a large bowl, combine the wet ingredients: mashed bananas, vegetable oil, eggs, vanilla extract, and unsweetened applesauce.
4. In another bowl mix the dry ingredients: whole wheat flour, baking soda, cinnamon, and salt.
5. Slowly add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients and stir until they are just combined.
6. Pour batter into the loaf pan. Bake for 50-60 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.
7. Let the bread cool in the pan for 10 minutes. Transfer the loaf to a wire rack to cool completely.
8. Cut the loaf into 12 slices. Serve and enjoy!

Recipe adapted from [Diabetes Care Community](#)

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