

# Type 2 Diabetes:

## How It Works:

Your body makes and uses insulin (a hormone) to keep your blood sugar in the normal range. When you have diabetes, your body doesn't make enough insulin or can't use insulin efficiently. This causes your blood sugar levels to go too high.

## Common Symptoms:

- Cuts/bruises that are slow to heal
- Feeling thirsty often
- Extreme fatigue and weakness
- Urinating often
- Blurry vision

## Tips to Care for Your Child's Heart When They Have Type 2 Diabetes:

1. Check in with your child's doctor regularly. Ask about their heart health.
2. Continue healthy eating habits. Add fruits and veggies as a start. Eating better will help them \*feel\* better.
3. Keep them moving and active. Kids need at least 60 minutes of exercise a day.
4. Practice good hygiene. Make sure hands are washed, baths are taken, teeth are brushed, and clothes are clean.
5. Don't let your children smoke.
6. Monitor your child's blood sugar, blood pressure, cholesterol and weight.
7. Take medication(s) only if prescribed by their doctor.
8. Insulin replacement therapy only if needed and under the direction of your child's doctor.

## CALCULATE YOUR RISK FOR PREDIABETES:

[doihaveprediabetes.org](http://doihaveprediabetes.org)

## LEARN MORE:

THERE'S PLENTY YOU CAN DO TO HELP MANAGE OR PREVENT TYPE 2 DIABETES IN YOUR CHILD.

Encourage your child to eat healthy foods, get plenty of physical activity and maintain a healthy weight. If healthy eating and exercise aren't enough to control type 2 diabetes, oral medication or insulin treatment may be needed.

See your child's health care provider if you notice any of the signs or symptoms of type 2 diabetes. Undiagnosed, the disease can cause serious damage.

Find answers to your questions and learn more:

- [cdc.gov/diabetes](http://cdc.gov/diabetes)
- [mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/type-2-diabetes-in-children/symptoms-causes/syc-20355318](http://mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/type-2-diabetes-in-children/symptoms-causes/syc-20355318)
- [KnowDiabetesbyHeart.org](http://KnowDiabetesbyHeart.org)
- Recipes:
  - [knowdiabetesbyheart.org/living-with-type-2/recipes/](http://knowdiabetesbyheart.org/living-with-type-2/recipes/)
- Nutrition Label:
  - [knowdiabetesbyheart.org/articles/understanding-the-nutrition-facts-label/](http://knowdiabetesbyheart.org/articles/understanding-the-nutrition-facts-label/)
- [myplate.gov](http://myplate.gov)
- [abirebuildhealth.org](http://abirebuildhealth.org)

## TYPE 2 DIABETES IN CHILDREN

As of 2021, 48,000 children and adolescents younger than age 20 years had been diagnosed with type 2 diabetes.

Diabetes is the eighth leading cause of death.

There were 5,300 NEW cases of diagnosed type 2 diabetes in youth from 2017 to 2018.

Diabetes is a condition that causes your blood glucose (or blood sugar) levels to rise too high. These high blood glucose levels can cause damage to your body in different ways, and diabetes makes you more likely to have heart disease or a stroke.



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## Risk Factors:

Researchers don't fully understand why some children develop type 2 diabetes and others don't, even if they have similar risk factors. However, it's clear that certain factors increase the risk, including:

- **Weight**- Being overweight is a strong risk factor for type 2 diabetes in children. The more fatty tissue children have (especially inside and between the muscle and skin around the abdomen) the more resistant their bodies' cells become to insulin.
- **Inactivity**- The less active children are, the greater their risk of type 2 diabetes.
- **Diet**- Eating red meat and processed meat and drinking sugar-sweetened beverages is associated with a higher risk of type 2 diabetes.
- **Family history**- Children's risk of type 2 diabetes increases if they have a parent or sibling with the disease.
- **Race or ethnicity**- Although it's unclear why, certain people — including Black, Hispanic, American Indian and Asian American people — are more likely to develop type 2 diabetes.
- **Age and sex**- Many children develop type 2 diabetes in their early teens, but it may occur at any age. Adolescent girls are more likely to develop type 2 diabetes than are adolescent boys.
- **Maternal gestational diabetes**- Children born to women who had gestational diabetes during pregnancy have a higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes.
- **Low birth weight or preterm birth**- Having a low birth weight is associated with a higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Babies born prematurely — before 39 to 42 weeks' gestation — have a greater risk of type 2 diabetes.

Type 2 diabetes in children is often associated with metabolic syndrome and polycystic ovarian syndrome.

## Preventing Type 2 Diabetes:

Mealtime makeover:

- Drink more water and fewer sugary drinks and sodas.
- Eat at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables each day.
- Make favorite foods healthier with swaps like whole grains, lean meats, and more vegetables.
- Get kids involved in making healthier meals.
- Have meals at the dinner table rather than in front of the TV or computer.
- Teach your kids how to read food labels.
- Have meals together as a family as often as you can.
- Avoid insisting kids clean their plates.
- Eat smaller portion sizes off smaller plates.
- Reward kids with praise instead of food or sweets.

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- Aim for your child to get 60 minutes of physical activity a day (doesn't have to be all at once).
- Make physical activity more fun; try new things.
- Ask kids what activities they like best—everyone is different.
- Limit screen time where possible.
- Plan active outings like walking, hiking, or biking.
- Turn chores into games where you can, with healthy prizes.

**Try Some Healthy Snacks Today:**

[eatingwell.com/article/291174/how-to-make-healthy-diabetes-friendly-snacks-for-kids/](https://www.eatingwell.com/article/291174/how-to-make-healthy-diabetes-friendly-snacks-for-kids/)

## Type 2 Diabetes & Diet:

**Shop Smart:**

- When grocery shopping, **plan ahead** for the week and always bring a list.
- **Stock up on seasonal produce that's on sale.** When fresh isn't available, choose canned or frozen vegetables and fruits without added sugars and sodium.
- **Look for whole-grain, high-fiber foods**, and limit your time on the aisles where there are boxed foods that may not be healthy. Take a close look at serving size and sodium and sugar content. Learning how to read and use the [Nutrition Facts label](#) on foods can help you make healthier food choices.
- **Limit packaged, processed, take-out foods** that tend to be high in saturated fat, sodium and added sugars. And avoid products with too much sugar. Look for its other names in the ingredient list such as sucrose, honey and high fructose corn syrup.
- Be wary of buy-one, get-one free deals. If they're not healthy foods, you're getting more than you bargained for.

**Balance Your Plate:**

- Start with a small plate.
- Fill **1/2** of the plate with vegetables.
- Fill **1/4** of the plate with grains or carbs, such as a small, plain sweet potato, brown rice, or whole-grain pasta.
- Fill **1/4** of the plate with a lean protein, like non-fried fish or skinless chicken.

**Try Some Healthy Recipes Today:**

[knowdiabetesbyheart.org/living-with-type-2/recipes/](https://www.knowdiabetesbyheart.org/living-with-type-2/recipes/)