

of central obesity also known as belly fat, are especially at risk.

Gestational Diabetes

This type of diabetes occurs during pregnancy. Most women can control gestational diabetes with exercise and diet, some may need to take some kind of glucose controlling medicines, mostly insulin-injections.

Undiagnosed or uncontrolled gestational diabetes can raise the risk of complications during childbirth.

What is pre-diabetes?

Most patients with type 2 diabetes initially had pre-diabetes. Their blood glucose levels were higher than the normal range but were not high enough to have a diabetes diagnoses.

When someone is pre-diabetic, the cells in the body are becoming resistant to insulin. At this stage some damage to the circulatory system and the heart may already have occurred.

Contact information

St. Maarten Medical Center

Internal Medicine

Welgelegen Road 30

Cay Hill

St. Maarten

Tel: +1 (721) 543-1111 ext 1300, 1310

Fax: + 1 (721) 543-0116

Email: info@sxmmc.sx

Web: www.sxmmc.sx

A publication of SMMC - October 2014
Revised June 2019

Diabetes



SAFETY
HEALTH
SATISFACTION

The pillars defining our quality care

We Care Together!

S | **M**
M | **C**

St. Maarten Medical Center

What is Diabetes?

Diabetes is often referred to by doctors as diabetes mellitus. It describes a group of metabolic diseases in which the person has high blood glucose, either because insulin production is inadequate, or because the body's cells do not respond properly to insulin or both.

Diabetes is a long-term condition that causes high blood sugar levels. People who have diabetes are referred to as diabetic.

How is Diabetes caused?

Diabetes is caused by a metabolism disorder. Metabolism refers to the way our bodies digest food. Most of what we eat is broken down into glucose, which is a form of sugar in the blood.

When our food is digested, glucose makes its way into our bloodstream. Our cells use the glucose for energy and growth. In order for glucose to enter our cells, we need insulin.

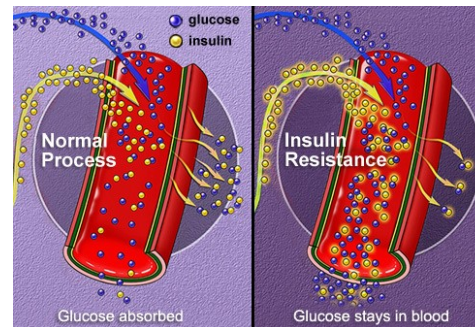
Insulin is a hormone that is produced by the pancreas. After eating, the pancreas automatically releases an adequate amount of insulin to move the glucose into the cells. When this happens blood-glucose levels drop. A diabetic person has a condition in which the quantity of glucose in the blood is too high (hyperglycemia). The body either does not produce enough insulin, produces no insulin or has cells that do not respond properly to the insulin the pancreas produces.

This results in too much glucose building up in the blood that eventually leaves the body via urine.

Types of Diabetes

- ◆ Type 1 Diabetes – the body does not produce insulin
- ◆ Type 2 Diabetes— the body does not produce enough insulin for proper function.
- ◆ Gestational diabetes – type that affects pregnant women

The most common form of diabetes is type 2 diabetes, accounting for approximately 90% of all cases.



What are the symptoms of diabetes?

The most common type of symptoms include:

- ◆ Frequent urination
- ◆ Intense thirst and hunger
- ◆ Unusual weight gain
- ◆ Fatigue
- ◆ Cuts and bruises that do not heal

- ◆ Male sexual dysfunction
- ◆ Numbness and tingling in hands and feet

Type 1 Diabetes

Persons with this type of diabetes, their bodies cannot produce insulin. This type is sometimes called insulin-dependent diabetes, juvenile diabetes, or early onset diabetes. People usually develop type 1 diabetes before the age of 40 or in the teenage years.

Type 1 diabetics have to take insulin injections for the rest of their life. They must also ensure proper blood-glucose levels by carrying out regular blood tests and following a special diet.

Type 2 Diabetes

The body does not produce enough insulin for proper function, or the cells in the body do not react to insulin (insulin resistance).

Some people can control their type 2 diabetes by losing weight, following a healthy diet, doing plenty of exercise and monitoring their blood glucose levels. However, as type 2 diabetes is usually progressive, the patient may need to take tablets. Ultimately a patient with type 2 diabetes may need insulin-injections.

Being overweight, physically inactive and having a poor diet increases the risk of developing type 2 diabetes. People with a lot