

**Diabetes develops when your body can't make or properly use a natural hormone.** This hormone, called insulin, is made in the pancreas. It helps the body's cells take in sugar from the blood stream. If diabetes goes undetected or is poorly controlled, blood vessels and nerves are damaged -leading to heart attacks, stroke, blindness, kidney failure, nerve damage and lower extremity infections and amputations.

**Type 2 diabetes accounts for over 90% of adult diagnoses,** and is more common after 60 years of age. Type 2 diabetes is the result of decreased insulin production and/or a decrease in the body's ability to respond to insulin.

**Being overweight can cause type 2 diabetes.** Excess body fat prevents insulin from working properly. Research shows that type2 diabetes can often be prevented with modest weight loss and 30 minutes of moderate exercise most days of the week.

**Those most at risk for type 2 diabetes are over 45, overweight, sedentary, and have a family history of diabetes.** Having high blood pressure, low HDL cholesterol and high triglyceride levels, a history of gestational diabetes or having given birth to a baby weighing more than 9 pounds as well as belonging to an ethnic group at high risk for diabetes increases the risk as well. Anyone with these characteristics should see their doctor to be tested for diabetes.