



Gestational Diabetes

What You Need to Know

Did you know that if you are pregnant, you could develop gestational diabetes?

What is gestational diabetes?

Gestational diabetes is diabetes that is found for the first time when a woman is pregnant. Having diabetes means your blood glucose, also called blood sugar, is too high. Too much glucose in your blood is not good for you or your baby.

Will I get gestational diabetes?

Anyone can have gestational diabetes. But you are more likely to get gestational diabetes if

- you have a parent, brother, or sister with diabetes
- you are African American, American Indian, Asian American, Hispanic/Latino, or Pacific Islander
- you are 25 years old or older
- you are overweight
- you have had gestational diabetes before, or have given birth to at least one baby weighing more than 9 pounds

How will gestational diabetes affect me and my baby?

Uncontrolled gestational diabetes may lead to high blood pressure while you are pregnant. It also makes it more likely that you will have a large baby and a difficult delivery. You might even need a cesarean section. Your baby could be born with low blood glucose or breathing problems.

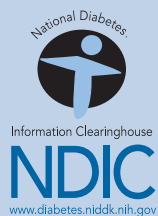
The good news is that your gestational diabetes will probably go away after your baby is born. However, you will be more likely to get type 2 diabetes later in life. Also, your gestational diabetes may come back if you get pregnant again.

What can I do about gestational diabetes?

Ask your doctor about getting tested for gestational diabetes.

If your doctor finds that you have gestational diabetes, you can take these steps to stay healthy while you are pregnant:

- Talk with your health care provider about what your blood glucose numbers should be.
- Follow a healthy meal plan that a dietitian or diabetes educator will design for you.
- Be physically active. For example, go for a walk every day. Talk with your health care team about the type of activity that is best for you.
- Take insulin as directed, if your health care team decides you need this medicine. Insulin is not harmful to your baby.





Where can I get more information about diabetes?

National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse

1 Information Way
Bethesda, MD 20892-3560
Phone: 1-800-860-8747
Fax: 703-738-4929
Email: ndic@info.niddk.nih.gov
Internet: www.diabetes.niddk.nih.gov

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The NIDDK Awareness and Prevention Series is designed to make you ask yourself, "Could this be me or someone I care for?" So take a closer look. Additional information on this topic and other titles in the series is available through the National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse or at www.diabetes.niddk.nih.gov.



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