



Fact Sheet

Are you at risk for diabetes?

Anyone can get diabetes, but you have a higher risk if you are over 45 years old, overweight, have a family history of diabetes, or just don't exercise regularly. African Americans, Hispanic/Latinos, Native Americans, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islanders are also at higher risk for developing diabetes.

Nearly 30 million American children and adults have diabetes, but one in four of them don't even know it.

Type 2 diabetes is the most common type of diabetes, and its symptoms can be so mild that a person may not even realize they are sick. They might be thirsty and have to urinate often, feel very hungry or tired, lose weight without trying, have sores that heal slowly, or have blurry eyesight.

With type 2 diabetes, too much sugar (glucose) builds up in the blood. After you eat, your body breaks food down into glucose and sends it throughout your body. A hormone called insulin helps your cells soak in the glucose and use it for energy. When you have diabetes, your body doesn't use insulin properly. It needs more insulin to help the glucose be absorbed into the cells and changed into energy. When your pancreas can't make insulin fast enough to keep up, too much sugar stays in your blood and begins to damage nerves and blood vessels. Over time this can lead to heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, blindness, and other problems.

To find out if you are at risk for diabetes, talk to your health care provider. You can also take a simple risk assessment from the American Diabetes Association by calling 1-800-DIABETES (1-800-342-2383) or by visiting <http://diabetes.org/alert>.

The good news is that type 2 diabetes can often be prevented or delayed by losing just 7 percent of your body weight with regular exercise and healthy food choices. Find out your risk for diabetes today. Early diagnosis is important to successfully treating and managing diabetes so that you can prevent complications like heart disease, stroke and blindness.

The Phelps/Maries County Health Department – caring for your family, caring for our community, caring for YOU!



Phelps/Maries County Health Dept

200 N Main, Suite G51, Rolla, MO 65401

(573) 458-6010 office

www.phelpscountyhealth.com



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