

Comprehensive Diabetes Care



Over the years, with greater knowledge and better management of diabetes, people with the condition have a better quality of life and fewer complications derived from diabetes. The largest reductions were seen in two of the leading causes of death: heart attacks and strokes.

Some of the serious complications of diabetes are:

Heart disease and stroke: People with diabetes are twice as likely as those without diabetes to develop heart disease or stroke.

Blindness and other vision problems:

Over time, diabetes can cause damage to the eyes and lead to vision loss and even blindness. Diabetes management and regular eye exams can help prevent these problems and stop them before they get worse. Eye diseases that can affect people with diabetes include:

- **Diabetic retinopathy.** It is an eye condition that can cause vision loss and blindness in people with diabetes. It affects the blood vessels in the retina, which is the light-sensitive layer of tissue located at the back of the eye. The early stages of diabetic retinopathy usually have no symptoms. Some people notice changes in vision, such as difficulty reading or seeing objects from a distance. These changes may come and go.
- **Cataracts.** Having diabetes makes you 2 to 5 times more likely to develop cataracts. It also makes them more likely to appear at a younger age.
- **Open-angle glaucoma.** Having diabetes may double the risk of developing a type of glaucoma known as open-angle glaucoma.

- **Kidney damage** causes chronic kidney disease. If left untreated, it can cause kidney failure. About 1 in 3 adults with diabetes have chronic kidney disease. You won't know if you have it unless your doctor tests it.
- **Nerve damage (neuropathy):** One of the most common complications of diabetes, nerve damage can cause numbness and pain.
- **Amputations: Damage** to blood vessels and nerves, especially in the feet, can cause serious infections that are difficult to treat. Stopping the spread of these infections may require amputation of the affected parts.

Generally, complications occur over time without necessarily presenting symptoms. Visit your doctor, even if you feel well. Early treatment can help prevent or delay diabetes-related conditions and improve your overall health.



Prevention measures

Leading a healthy lifestyle is key to preventing or delaying complications:

- Follow a healthy eating plan.
- Stay active, get physical activity at least 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week.

Watch for risk factors and tests you should have, such as:

- **Glycated hemoglobin (HbA1c)** test is a blood test that measures the average level of glucose, or sugar in the blood over the past three months. It may be ordered alone or in combination with other tests to make a diagnosis. It is used to know how you are managing the condition. This test is different from the blood sugar checks

that people with diabetes have every day. It is advisable to have a result of less than seven.



- Keep your blood pressure below 140/90 mm Hg, or the target set by your doctor.
- Manage your cholesterol levels.
- Do not smoke.
- Maintaining a healthy weight can help reduce complications.
- Use medications as directed and talk to your doctor if you have questions or problems related to your medications.

- Make appointments with your health care team (primary care physician, dentist, podiatrist, ophthalmologist, and dietitian or dietitian) and keep your appointments.
- Have a dilated eye exam at least once a year. The earlier the eye problems are detected and treated, the better it is for your visual health.



Social and Emotional Aspect

For recommendations, tools, and resources on how you and your family can cope with the emotional and physical concerns that arise during and after your medical treatment, please visit your primary care physician or call the following phone lines:

Medical Advice Line

1-844-347-7801

TTY/TDD 1-844-347-7804

APS Health

787-641-9133

References:

<https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/es/prevention-type-2/la-diabetes-y-la-inseguridad-alimentaria.html>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/diabetes/symptoms-causes/syc-20371444>

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