

DIABETES FACT SHEET

What is diabetes?

Diabetes is a prevalent metabolic condition that can lead to elevated blood sugar levels and affect various parts of the body, including the eyes, kidneys, and nerves.

How does it occur?

Diabetes is a chronic condition that occurs when the body's ability to regulate blood sugar, or glucose, is impaired. It typically arises due to a combination of genetic and lifestyle factors. In diabetes, the body either doesn't produce enough insulin (a hormone responsible for regulating blood sugar) or doesn't use it effectively. As a result, glucose accumulates in the bloodstream, leading to a range of health complications. Lifestyle modifications, medication, and insulin therapy are often used to manage diabetes and help individuals lead healthier lives.

Signs and Symptoms

The signs and symptoms of diabetes can vary depending on the type of diabetes and its severity, but there are common indicators to watch for. These may include frequent urination, excessive thirst, unexplained weight loss, extreme fatigue, blurred vision, slow wound healing, and recurrent infections. In the case of type 1 diabetes, symptoms may appear suddenly, while type 2 diabetes symptoms often develop more gradually and can sometimes go unnoticed for years. It's crucial to recognize these warning signs and seek medical evaluation and advice if you or someone you know is experiencing them, as early diagnosis and management are essential to controlling diabetes and preventing complications.

Test Options

Healthcare professionals primarily rely on blood tests to diagnose diabetes. The most common test is the fasting blood sugar test, which measures glucose levels after an overnight fast. Another common method is the oral glucose tolerance test, where glucose levels are checked after fasting and then again after drinking a sugary solution. Hemoglobin A1c testing provides a long-term average of blood sugar levels.

For those seeking the convenience of at-home testing, there are various blood glucose monitoring devices and test kits available. These typically involve a small fingerstick to collect a blood sample, which is then analyzed using a portable glucometer. Continuous glucose monitoring systems can also track glucose levels around the clock, providing valuable data to manage diabetes effectively.

It's important to consult a healthcare professional to determine the most suitable testing method and frequency based on individual health and diabetes type. Accurate and regular testing is essential for achieving optimal blood sugar control and preventing complications associated with diabetes.

Treatment Options

The right treatment can help manage diabetes – it is important to consult a healthcare provider to develop the appropriate treatment plan for each individual situation. Therapies may include the following: Lifestyle Modifications, Oral Medications, Insulin Therapy, Injectable Medications.