



## **Type 2 Diabetes Fact Sheet**

### **What is Type 2 Diabetes?**

Type 2 diabetes is a chronic disease where your body doesn't use insulin well and is unable to keep your blood sugar levels normal. More than 30 million people in the United States have diabetes, and 1 in 4 of them don't know they have it. Type 2 diabetes accounts for about 90% to 95% of all diagnosed cases of diabetes. Healthy lifestyle and positive behavior changes will help prevent or delay type 2 diabetes and other serious health problems. Type 2 diabetes can be prevented!!

### **What Causes Type 2 Diabetes?**

Insulin is a hormone made by your pancreas that acts like a key to let blood sugar into cells for use as energy. If you have prediabetes, the cells in your body don't respond normally to insulin. Your pancreas makes more insulin to try to get cells to respond. Eventually your pancreas can't keep up, and your blood sugar rises, setting the stage for prediabetes—and type 2 diabetes down the road.

### **Signs & Symptoms**

Type 2 diabetes symptoms often develop over several years and can go on for a long time without being noticed. Type 2 diabetes usually starts when you're an adult, though more and more children, teens, and young adults are developing it. Because symptoms are hard to spot, it's important to know the risk factors for type 2 diabetes and visit your doctor if you have any of them.

### **What You Should Know About Type 2 Diabetes**

- African Americans, Hispanic/Latino Americans, American Indians, Pacific Islanders, and some Asian Americans are at higher risk.
- Being overweight - especially around the abdomen (stomach) increases your risks.
- Being 45 years or older increases your risks.
- Having a parent, brother, or sister with type 2 diabetes increases your risks.
- Being physically active less than 3 times a week increases your risk.
- Having a history of gestational diabetes (diabetes during pregnancy) or giving birth to a baby who weighed more than 9 pounds.
- Smokers are 30–40% more likely to develop type 2 diabetes than nonsmokers.

**Source:** [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

*This project is conducted in partnership with the Black Women's Health Imperative through a cooperative agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the Department of Health and Human Services.*