

Diabetes and you

Whether you already have the disease or could be at risk, here's what you need to know

Did you know, according to the American Diabetes Association, half of all Americans 65 and older have prediabetes? That means their blood sugar is higher than normal but not high enough to be classified as type 2 diabetes. Learning what your diabetes risk is gives you the power to prevent it — or begin controlling it. You are more likely to get the disease if you are:

- 45 or older.
- Overweight, with a body mass index (BMI) above 25.
- Inactive.
- Have a family history of type 2 diabetes.

If you have one of these risk factors, ask your doctor for a quick blood sugar test.

If you've recently been diagnosed

Maybe you were shocked to hear you have diabetes. To be sure, it is a life-changing disease. If not well-controlled, it can lead to serious health problems. But with 3 simple lifestyle changes, you can live happier and healthier with diabetes:

- **Educate yourself** – Don't hesitate to ask questions of your doctor.
- **Eat healthier** – If you are overweight, commit to losing 5% to 7% of your weight within a year. Changing just a few eating habits can make a difference.
- **Aim for 150 minutes of physical activity each week** – That's a little more than 20 minutes a day. It's okay to start slowly.

If you're living with diabetes

In addition to eating right, staying active and taking your medications as prescribed by your doctor, these regular screenings may also help you stay healthy:

- **Eye exam** – Diabetic retinopathy is the leading cause of blindness among American adults, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. But yearly exams can often prevent eye problems.
- **Urine test for protein** – A urine test monitors your kidneys and can help limit damage common with diabetes.
- **Hemoglobin A1C (HbA1C)** – This test measures your average blood sugar over the past 3 months. Knowing the results can determine how well you and your doctor are managing your condition, and help forestall complications.

Get diabetes resources: Sign in to your plan website www.retiree.uhc.com/xxxxxx, go to **Health & Wellness** and look for the **Managing Diabetes Quick Link**

Sources:

The National Institutes of Health (NIH)

National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases

Renew Magazine, 2020

This information is for educational purposes only and is not a substitute for the advice of a doctor. Consult your doctor prior to beginning an exercise program or making changes to your lifestyle or health care routine.