

Prediabetes

And the Prevention of Type 2 Diabetes

What is Prediabetes?

Prediabetes is a term that describes blood sugar levels that are higher than normal but not high enough to diagnose diabetes. Prediabetes includes impaired fasting glucose, impaired glucose tolerance, and/or an HbA1C of 6.0-6.4%.

Having prediabetes increases your child's risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

What are the risk factors for developing diabetes in children?

- Family history: Parent or sibling with type 2 diabetes, or history of diabetes in pregnancy.
- Background: Indigenous, Hispanic, Asian, or African decent.
- Your child is carrying extra weight.
- Your child spends a lot of time in front of screens (>2 hour per day).
- Acanthosis nigricans (darkened skin, that is not removed by washing, around the neck, underarms, and/or groin).
- Prediabetes.

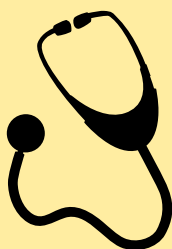
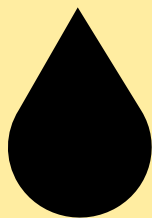


This is a photo of acanthosis nigricans.

Warning signs of high blood sugar

- Frequent thirst
- Frequent urination (ie. Waking up in the middle of the night to pee)
- Rapid weight loss
- Extreme tiredness

Contact your care provider if your child is experiencing these symptoms.





Make Healthy Choices

Small steps can go a long way towards helping your blood sugar levels and building healthy habits.

- Eat 3 small meals a day plus 1-2 snacks (if needed).
- Eat breakfast.
- Make more meals at home versus eating out.
- Take time to eat as a family.
- Listen to your hunger cues by eating slower.
- Encourage your child to pick a new vegetable, and/or healthy snack to try each week.
- Have your child involved in the cooking process. They can choose a recipe and help prepare the meal.

Follow the Plate Method

A balanced plate has foods from all food groups.

- Aim for half your plate to be vegetables, 1/4 plate protein foods (beef, chicken, pork, bison, tofu, fish), and 1/4 plate carbohydrate containing foods (bread, pasta, rice, bannock, corn, potatoes).
- Choose water or milk as your family's drink of choice.



Avoid Sugar Drinks

Sugary drinks have a lot of extra sugar and calories which can increase your blood sugars.



- Avoid regular pop, fruit juice (even the "no sugar added" kind), juice crystals, sweetened coffee/tea, energy drinks & slushies, iced tea.
- Make water or low fat milk the drink of choice with every meal.
- Your child can also try water infused with sliced fruit like oranges and mint. Other suggestions: Crystal lite sachets, Mio drops or diet pop.

Physical Activity

Physical activity has countless benefits, such as: lowering blood sugars, maintaining a healthy body, reducing stress and anxiety, improving sleep, and many more.

Try to incorporate daily physical activity. Here are some examples:

- Go for family walks, bike rides, and/or hikes.
- Encourage your child to help out around the home by doing housework and yard work.
- Join a team, at the school or community.
- Participate in online exercises or dance videos on YouTube or other virtual platforms.
- Break up screen time by doing jumping jacks, pushups, wall sits, etc., during commercials.
- Try a resistance band workout.

Encourage your child to start exercising 20-30 minutes, 3 times a week. Work up to a goal of 60 minutes per day.

Screen Time



Consider your child's time on the screens: video games, TV, phone, social media, etc. The more time they are spending there, the less time that have to be active.

- Aim to limit total screen time to less than 2 hours per day. Removing screens from bedrooms and mealtimes can help!

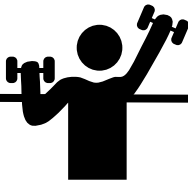


Sleep

Lack of sleep can make your child eat more and engage in less physical activity, which can contribute to higher blood sugar levels.

Create a bedtime routine, healthy sleep habits include:

- No screens at least 1 hour before bed
- Keep your child's room quite and dark
- Keep a consistent bedtime and wake up time
- Relax before bed (read a book, have a bath)



Be a Role Model

- Be a good role model. Practice the eating and exercise habits you'd like your children to have. Your example is your child's most powerful learning tool.
- Get your whole family involved. These tips can benefit everyone in your family to help them live a healthier life.

