Understanding Diabetes

Diabetes is a health condition where there is too much sugar (glucose) in the blood. Glucose is your body's main source of energy. Your body uses a hormone called insulin to move glucose from your blood into your cells. When your body does not make enough insulin or cannot use it well, your blood sugar gets too high.

Types of diabetes

Type 1 diabetes
The body stops making insulin. People with Type 1 diabetes need to take insulin every day.

Type 2 diabetes
The body still makes insulin, but it does not use it well. Over time, the pancreas may stop making enough insulin. This is the most common type of diabetes. It is more common in people who are not physically active, have a family history of diabetes, or have excess weight.

Gestational diabetes
The body cannot make enough insulin during pregnancy. It often goes away after the baby is born. People who have gestational diabetes have a higher chance of getting Type 2 diabetes later.

LADA (Latent Autoimmune Diabetes in Adults)
At first, it may look like Type 2 diabetes. Over time, the body stops making insulin. You will need to take insulin every day.

Testing for diabetes

Doctors use blood tests to check for diabetes. These tests measure how much glucose is in your blood.

Test	Normal	Prediabetes	Diabetes
A1C	Below 5.7%	5.7%–6.4%	6.5% or higher
Fasting blood glucose	Below 100 mg/dL	100–125 mg/dL	126 mg/dL or higher
Oral glucose tolerance test (2-hour)	Below 140 mg/dL	140–199 mg/dL	200 mg/dL or higher
Random blood glucose	–	–	200 mg/dL or higher (with symptoms)

CENTRAL HEALTH

How Type 2 changes

Over time, your body may make less insulin. You may need medicine or insulin shots to keep your blood sugar at a healthy level. Checking your blood sugar and seeing your care team helps track these changes. Some people can manage diabetes with healthy eating and regular physical activity.

How to live with diabetes

With the right care and support, you can live a long, healthy life with diabetes. You can keep blood sugar at a healthy level by following these seven (7) self-care habits:

- **Healthy eating:** Eat balanced meals and healthy snacks. Use tools like MyPlate to help choose the right portion sizes.
- **Being active:** Be active for about 30 minutes most days.
- **Monitoring:** Check your blood sugar as your doctor tells you to.
- **Taking medication:** Take your diabetes medicine or insulin exactly as your doctor tells you to.
- **Caring for emotional health:** Take care of your mental health. Ask for help when you need it.
- **Problem solving:** Learn what to do if your blood sugar is too high or too low.
- **Reducing risks:** Keep up with check-ups and screenings. Take care of your feet. Manage your blood pressure and cholesterol.