

PRE-DIABETES

Take control



The New Mexico Department of Health estimates that more than 120,000 New Mexicans have diabetes, but 36,000 don't know they have it.

Your doctor has diagnosed you with pre-diabetes. While this means you face an increased risk of developing type 2 diabetes, there are steps you can take to protect yourself. With modest weight loss, a physically active lifestyle, and a healthy diet, you can control your blood sugar and help prevent diabetes.

What is pre-diabetes? Before people develop type 2 diabetes, they almost always have pre-diabetes. With pre-diabetes, blood sugar levels are higher than normal but not yet high enough to develop into diabetes.

Along with putting you at greater risk for diabetes, pre-diabetes also increases your chance of getting heart disease. The American Diabetes Association (ADA) says there is evidence that pre-diabetes may cause long-term damage to your heart and circulatory system.

You can have pre-diabetes and not even know it. Many people don't have any symptoms. And if you do have symptoms, they often develop gradually. Symptoms of diabetes can include unusual thirst, a frequent need to urinate, blurred vision, and unexplained fatigue.

Anyone can get pre-diabetes. But the ADA says you face a greater risk if you: ➤ Have a family history of diabetes ➤ Are over age 45 ➤ Are black, Hispanic, American Indian, or Asian American ➤ Have high blood pressure or cholesterol ➤ Are overweight or inactive

If you are over 45, check with your doctor about having a blood test for diabetes. If you are younger than 45 but have any of the other risk factors, you should also consider getting tested.

Preventing and controlling pre-diabetes If you take action to manage your blood sugar, you can prevent or control pre-diabetes. If you already have pre-diabetes, simple lifestyle changes can help you delay or prevent diabetes. You can even return your blood sugar to a normal level.

To reduce your risk for pre-diabetes and diabetes, the National Institutes of

Health offers these tips: ➤ Maintain a healthy weight. Find out your body mass index—a measurement of your weight and height. If you are overweight, set a reasonable weight loss goal and work toward achieving it. ➤ Make wise food choices. Eat more fruits and vegetables, and limit foods high in fat. Talk to your doctor about an eating plan that's right for you. ➤ Be active every day. Try to get at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity every day. Go for a walk, take the stairs instead of the elevator, or go swimming or bicycling. ➤ Keep your blood pressure and cholesterol at healthy levels.

**Healthy habits
can help control
blood sugar.**