

Diabetes is a life-long condition that affects millions of Americans. When you have diabetes, your body cannot take the foods you eat and break them down to be used for energy. This causes high blood sugar (glucose) in the bloodstream.

In a healthy body, when we eat carbohydrates (starches, fruit, and milk):

- The stomach breaks down those foods into sugar.
- The sugar then enters the blood stream.
- Once there is sugar in the bloodstream, the pancreas releases insulin.
- Insulin acts as the key to unlock the cell, which allows the sugar to enter the cell.
- When this happens, your blood sugar level goes down because the sugar moves out of the blood into the cell.

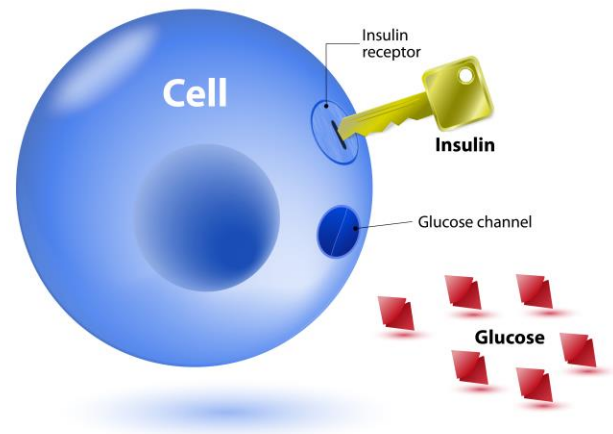
Types of Diabetes

There are two types of diabetes:

Type 1 Diabetes is caused by the pancreas not making insulin.

Type 2 Diabetes occurs when the cells do not respond to insulin properly. This is called insulin resistance.

IMPORTANCE OF INSULIN



Because insulin is not available or not working properly to unlock the cell, sugar is not able to enter the cells and remains in the blood. This is why people with diabetes have high blood sugar levels.

Effects of High Blood Sugar

When blood sugar is high, it causes damage to your blood vessels. This damage can lead to these complications:

- Vision problems
- A higher risk for heart attack and stroke
- Kidney disease
- Sexual dysfunction
- Amputation of toes, feet, and legs

Managing Your Blood Sugar

When you have diabetes, the most important thing you can do is manage your blood sugar levels. This involves:

- Checking your blood sugar as instructed.
- Taking medicines as prescribed.
- Eating healthy.
- Exercising regularly.

Blood Sugar Level Goals when you have diabetes

Before a meal: 80 – 130mg/dL

2 hours after a meal: less than 180mg/dL

Keeping your blood sugar levels normal is the key to preventing damage to your blood vessels. This helps your eyes, heart, brain, kidneys, and feet stay healthy.

Preventing the complications of diabetes depends on what your blood sugar is today and every day.

Diabetes Self-Management

Learning more about diabetes is the best way to manage it and stay healthy. The Mount Carmel Diabetes Self-Management Program offers:

- Classes
- Individual appointments
- Support groups

To register for the Mount Carmel Diabetes Self-Management Program, Call 614-546-4582.

You can manage your diabetes and lead a long and healthy life by taking care of yourself each day.

Resources

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
eatright.org

American Diabetes Association
diabetes.org

AADE-American Association of Diabetes Educators
diabeteseducator.org

CDC-Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
cdc.gov/diabetes