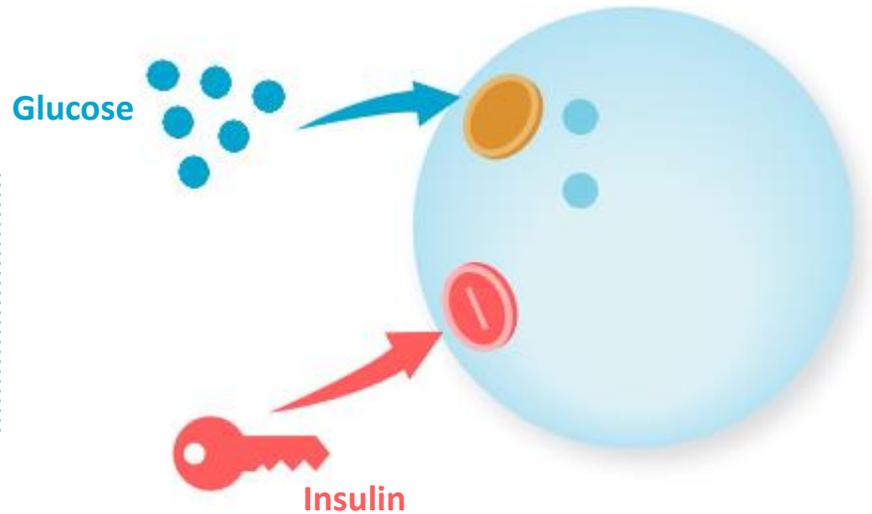


What is Diabetes?

Diabetes is an illness that makes your **blood glucose (blood sugar)** too high. This is a chronic disease, which means it lasts a long time. Diabetes keeps glucose from going into your cells.



Your body makes a substance called **insulin**, which acts like a **key** to unlock your cells, letting **glucose** into the cells to be used for **energy**.

What does high blood glucose look like?

If you are not able to use **glucose** for energy, you will likely feel hungry and tired or weak, and you may also:



Feel thirsty



Need to go to the bathroom frequently



Have blurry vision

How can high blood glucose harm my body?

Too much glucose in your blood causes damage to your blood vessels. Over time, this damage can affect your entire body, causing damage to your:



HEART

Diabetes can cause heart disease and increases your chance for heart attack and stroke.



KIDNEYS

Damage to your kidneys can lead to kidney failure and the need to for dialysis.



EYES

Diabetes can damage your eyes and cause blindness.



NERVES

Diabetes can attack your nerves, causing numbness, pain, and weakness in your arms, hands, legs, and feet.

How can I manage my diabetes?



Check your **blood glucose** every day

Ask your doctor how many times a day you need to check your blood glucose. Keep a log of your results to share with your doctor.



Take the **medicine** your doctor gave you

Follow the instructions on the label. When you start to run out, plan for a refill.



See your **doctor** every 3-6 months

Ask your doctor how many times a day you need to check your blood glucose. Keep a log of your results to share with your doctor.



Get a **dental** check-up every 6 months

Your dentist can tell if your diabetes is causing problems in your mouth.



Eat well and **exercise**

Eating healthy foods and exercising are important ways to manage your diabetes. Talk to your doctor about what may work best for you.



Have your **eyes** checked once per year

Diabetes can cause damage to your eyes that you may not notice until it's too late. Getting your eyes checked is one way to prevent this.

Remember!

- Diabetes can cause damage to your whole body.
- You can do a lot to take care of you diabetes.
- Talk with your doctor about any questions you have.

My doctor's name: _____

My doctor's phone number: _____

My question(s):

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____