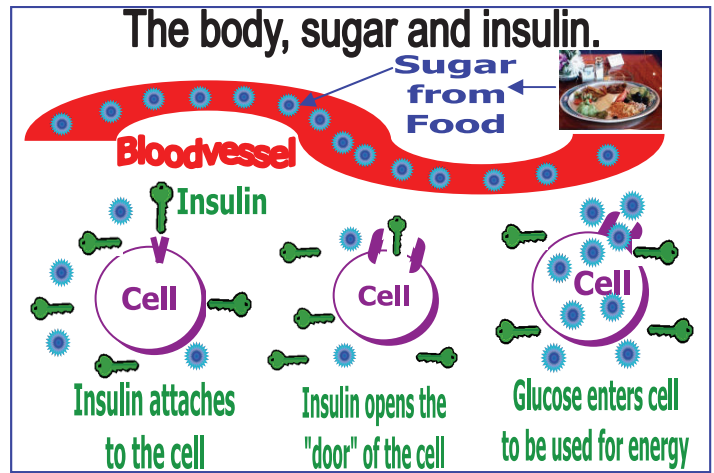


Survival Skills....Diabetes Overview

What is Diabetes?

Diabetes is a disease in which the body can not use food for energy. Your body gets the energy it needs from food. After you eat, food breaks down into sugar and the blood vessels carry the sugar to all the cells in the body. Your body changes most foods into sugar, so you can get high blood sugar even without eating sweets.

Insulin acts like a key and unlocks the door of the cell so the sugar can enter. With diabetes, you either do not make enough insulin or do not use the insulin you make. Without insulin, sugar can not enter the cells and it builds up in the blood causing high blood sugar levels and may lead to complications.



Is there a cure for diabetes?

There is no cure at this time. Once you have diabetes, you always have diabetes. Diabetes does not go away with treatment, you just learn to control it!

What are the signs and symptoms of diabetes?

When sugar builds up in the blood, your body starts to give you signals. The chart at right shows the common signs and symptoms (signals) of high blood sugar. You may have some; all or none of these symptoms.

Signs and Symptoms of Diabetes

- a need to urinate often
- extreme thirst
- hunger
- sudden weight loss
- blurred vision
- dry, itchy skin
- weakness
- numbness or tingling in hands and feet
- slow healing cuts or sores

What are the types of Diabetes?

Type 1 Diabetes

Type 1 Diabetes occurs **more often in people less than 30**. In Type 1 Diabetes the body makes no insulin so the sugar can not enter the cells. If you have **Type 1 Diabetes you must take insulin injections daily**. You also need to eat healthy, get regular exercise and check your blood sugar.

Type 2 Diabetes

The body makes insulin but it is not enough or it does not work right. Some people with Type 2 Diabetes can **control it with a meal plan and exercise**. If these don't work alone, then you need **diabetes pills**. At some point, you may need to take **insulin**. Just like people with Type 1 Diabetes, you also need to check your blood sugar. Type 2 Diabetes occurs **more often in people over 40**. About 90% of people with diabetes have Type 2 Diabetes.

Please **call 1-800-SENTARA (736-8272)** to sign up for the
“Healthy Living with Diabetes” classes