

Diabetes in Pregnancy



Diabetes happens when the body is not able to make or use insulin.

- Insulin is a hormone that you need for your everyday life.
- It takes the sugar, starches, and other food you eat and changes them into energy.
- If you have diabetes and it is not treated, you can have serious problems with:
 - Your vision
 - Your kidney function
 - Your blood flow

There are 2 main types of diabetes:

- Diabetes mellitus type 1.
 - This type begins during childhood or young adulthood.
 - The pancreas is not making insulin.
 - It is treated with insulin injections, diet, and exercise.
- Diabetes mellitus type 2.
 - The pancreas is not making enough insulin.
 - The body cannot use the insulin that is made.
 - It is treated with diet and exercise and sometimes pills.
 - During pregnancy, insulin shots may be needed.
- The goal of treatment is to keep the blood sugar at a normal level.

Pregestational Diabetes (Before Pregnancy)

- If you have diabetes before you get pregnant, it is called pregestational diabetes.
- It is usually type 1 diabetes.
- If you are overweight, it may be type 2 diabetes.
- When you are getting ready to get pregnant, it is very important to keep your blood sugar levels as normal as possible.
- If you have high blood sugar levels during the 1st 2 to 8 weeks of pregnancy, your baby can have problems.
- Follow the guidelines set by your doctor to keep good control over your blood sugar levels.

- Your doctor may tell you to do the following:
 - Check your blood sugar more often.
 - Change your diet by eating the right foods.
 - Change your medicine.
 - Get exercise (your doctor will tell you how much is good for you).
- Blood sugar can be tested with a special meter using a drop of your blood.
- You can see how exercise, medicine, and what you eat can change your blood sugar level.

Gestational Diabetes

- Diabetes that happens during pregnancy is called gestational diabetes.
- It does not happen that often.
- It usually happens first during the 2nd or 3rd trimester.
- It happens when the body is not able to make enough insulin to meet the extra needs during pregnancy.
- It happens when the body cannot use the insulin that is made.
- It is usually temporary and goes away after the baby is born.
- Talk to your doctor about the right treatment and what you can do to control your blood sugar.
- You and your baby should not have any complications, and your pregnancy will progress normally.

With the right treatment and good control of blood sugar, both mom and baby will have no increased risk of complications.

The following is a list of risk factors for getting diabetes during pregnancy:

- You are overweight before you became pregnant.
- You have a family history of diabetes.
- You had a baby weighing 9 pounds or more.
- You are over 25 years old when you get pregnant.
- You are Hispanic, African American, Native American, Asian American, or Pacific Islander.

Prenatal Testing

- Testing for diabetes is usually done between the 24th and 28th week of pregnancy.
 - This is the time when your hormones may affect the insulin your body is making.
 - The test will check a blood sample 1 hour after you drink a sweet-tasting liquid.
 - If results are over 140 mg/dl, more testing will be done.
 - All women who develop diabetes while they are pregnant should have their blood sugar tested 6 to 8 weeks after their baby is born to make sure it is normal again.
 - If levels are normal, the test should be done again at least every 3 years.
 - If your levels are high, your doctor may tell you that you need more treatment.

Complications

- No matter what type of diabetes you have, your doctor will tell you what to do to control it.
- If you have diabetes and you do not take care of it, your health can be harmed.

The following are some of the problems untreated diabetes can cause for you and your baby:

FOR YOU

- If you do not eat and drink enough for both you and your baby:
 - Large amounts of ketones can build up.
 - Ketones cause your body to burn stored fat for energy.
 - Large amounts of ketones may harm you or your baby.
 - To keep this from happening, you need to eat meals and snack at regularly scheduled times.



- Preeclampsia is high blood pressure during pregnancy with protein in the urine.
 - Symptoms include swelling of the face, hands, and legs.
- Urinary tract infections (UTIs) happen when your blood sugar levels are higher than normal.
- If you have a UTI and you do not get treated, the infection may spread to the kidneys.
 - It may cause early labor.

FOR BABY

- If your blood sugar is too high, the extra sugar will go to your baby.
 - This will cause your baby to grow larger than normal (over 9 pounds).
 - If you give birth to a very large baby, it can be hard for both of you.
 - The high blood sugar levels may harm your baby's lung development.
 - The placenta may not be able to carry nutrients to your baby.
- Your baby will keep making extra insulin for a time after birth.
 - The baby's blood sugar level will fall below normal and can cause serious problems if it is not treated.
 - The baby will be given sugar water from a bottle or by intravenous (IV) line during the 1st few hours after birth to fix this problem.
 - Your baby may need to stay in the hospital a little longer or may need to stay in the special care nursery.



You must gain a reasonable amount of weight from the right foods to keep your baby growing.

Weight Gain

What you eat affects:

- Your blood sugar levels every day
- How well your baby grows
- Your weight:
 - If you weigh too much it will be harder to control your diabetes.
 - Extra weight makes it harder for your body to use insulin.
- You will be able to make good choices about eating by learning how food, weight, and diabetes are related.
- 80% to 90% of people with type 2 diabetes are overweight.

- Extra weight makes it harder for the body to use insulin.
- There is a bigger risk of high blood pressure and high cholesterol.
- Pregnancy is not the time to diet.
- If you are overweight, your doctor may suggest you gain 10 pounds less than what they would normally have you gain.
- You must gain a reasonable amount of weight from the right foods to keep your baby growing.
- Pregnancy is a time for you to look closely at your eating habits and make good choices in the foods you eat.
- You may need to change the way you eat and how you exercise.
 - It takes time to exercise and plan meals.

Here are some tips to help you plan a healthy way of life when you are pregnant:

- **Ask your doctor.**
 - How much weight should you gain during your pregnancy?
- **Make a plan for healthy eating.**
 - It is easier to eat better if you have a plan for how much and what to eat.
 - A registered dietitian (RD) is a good person to help you set up a plan.
 - Your doctor can refer you to an RD.
- **Eat regular meals and snacks.**
- **Meals should be about the same size.**
 - Have several small meals a day to keep your blood sugar levels okay.
- **Meals should include foods from all of the food groups.**
- **Keep a record of what you eat.**
 - Write down everything you eat for each meal and snack.
 - When you look at the list, you may see some things that are not good choices.
 - You will see the amount of food that you eat.
- **Increase your activity level.**
 - Find a partner to exercise with — you will be more likely to stick with it.
 - Always ask your doctor what kind of exercise you can do.
 - Your doctor will tell you how much exercise is best for you during your pregnancy.

- **Try not to use food to cope.**
 - Don't eat extra food because you are angry, sad, or bored.
 - Find other ways to feel better.
 - Take up a new hobby.
 - Talk with a friend.
 - Take a warm bath.
 - Watch a favorite movie.
 - Take a walk.
 - Sip a mug of tea.

- **Your doctor may refer you to someone to talk to.**
 - This person can help you with emotional problems that may be causing you to eat too much.

Blood Sugar — the Highs and Lows

HYPERGLYCEMIA

- HYPERGLYCEMIA means your blood sugar is too high.
- It usually happens slowly, over hours or days.
- If your blood sugar is more than 140 mg/dl (or more than 95 mg/dl fasting), it is too high.
- Hyperglycemia is caused by:
 - Not enough insulin in your body.
 - Eating too much.
 - Not enough physical activity.
 - Illness.
 - Changes in your schedule such as a special occasion.
 - Physical or emotional stress.

There are 2 ways to know if your blood sugar is too high:

1. Any time your blood sugar reading on your meter is greater than 140 mg/dl (unless your doctor told you a different number).
2. You feel different than normal.

You are thirstier than usual	You have blurred vision
You are hungrier than usual	You are more tired than usual
You are urinating more often	You have a headache

For Women With Type 1 Diabetes

- When you have hyperglycemia:
 - Your body will break down fats to use for energy because you do not have enough insulin in your body.
 - This causes acids, called ketones, to appear in the blood.
- When your hyperglycemia is not treated:
 - Ketones will appear in the urine.
 - **This is a warning sign of ketoacidosis, a severe form of hyperglycemia.**
- Follow these tips to avoid high blood sugar:
 - Check your blood sugar as soon as you think you may have high blood sugar.
 - Eat the right amounts of food at the right time.
 - Take insulin as directed by your doctor.
 - Get regular physical exercise.
 - Drink enough fluids.
 - Write down all of your blood sugar readings.
- If you are treated with insulin, wear an easy-to-see identification that says you have diabetes.

HYPOGLYCEMIA means your blood sugar is too low.

- It happens quickly, usually within a few minutes.
- Low blood sugar can be caused by:
 - Too much insulin (if you take insulin).
 - Too much exercise.
 - Too little food.
 - Physical or emotional stress.

- Women who are treated only with diet and exercise should not experience low blood sugar (unless meals are missed).

There are 2 ways to know if your blood sugar is too low:

1. Your blood sugar is at a dangerous level if your reading is 65 mg/dl or lower.
2. You may feel different.

You feel shaky (trembly)	You have a rapid, pounding heart beat
You feel sweaty	You feel dizzy or weak
You are hungrier than normal	You have blurred vision
You have trouble concentrating	You have a headache
You are drowsy	You have a loss of coordination
You are confused	You are behaving differently
You feel irritable (grouchy)	You have slurred speech
You are having a seizure	You have loss of consciousness
Coma	

Low blood sugar is easy to treat if you know what to do before it happens.

- If you think your blood sugar is low (less than 65 mg/dl):
 - Test your blood sugar to get your level.
- If you are pregnant, the best treatment for low blood sugar is 1 cup of



In pregnancy, the best treatment for low blood sugar is 1 cup of milk (skim or low fat).

- milk (skim or low fat).
 - It has protein and 12 grams of carbohydrates.
 - If you cannot get milk, take 3 to 4 glucose tablets.
- Check your blood sugar 15 minutes after you drink the milk.
- If it is still less than 65 mg/dl, drink another cup of milk or 3 to 4 glucose tablets.
- Check your blood sugar 15 minutes after the second treatment.
- If it is still less than 65 mg/dl and it is time for your next meal, eat your meal.
- If it is not time for your next meal, have a snack of 1/2 sandwich and a glass of milk.

- When your blood sugar is above 65 mg/dl, check it again in 1 hour to be sure it stays above 65 mg/dl.
- If your blood sugar gets low during the night or after exercise:
 - Have $\frac{1}{2}$ starch and $\frac{1}{2}$ meat exchange after you get your blood sugar above 65 mg/dl.
 - This will stop your blood sugar from falling again.

If you feel like you have low blood sugar and are not able to check it with your meter, treat yourself anyway.

Learn your signs or symptoms of low blood sugar.

- Everyone feels different when their blood sugar drops below 65 mg/dl.
- If you cannot count on feeling your symptoms when your blood sugar is low, check your blood sugar more often.

To avoid low blood sugar, follow these tips:

- Eat the right amounts of food at the right times.
- Take the right amount of diabetes medicine at the right time.
- Plan ahead for exercise or increased physical activity.
- Keep a log of your blood sugar readings.
- Always have something with you to treat low blood sugar.
- Check blood sugar before you drive.
- Never drive when your blood sugar is low, or when you are having symptoms of low blood sugar. Keep a good source of sugar in your car at all times.
- Wear an easy-to-see identification that says you have diabetes.
- Write down the time of day, blood sugar reading, and anything you think may cause low blood sugar.
- If you take insulin:
 - Have glucagon on hand to treat unconscious low blood sugar (blood sugar so low that you need help and cannot, or will not, take carbohydrates by mouth).
 - Teach people you live and work with how to recognize severe hypoglycemia.
 - Teach them where you keep your glucagon.
 - Show them how to prepare and inject your medicine if you have a severe reaction and need help.

- Everyone's blood sugar goes up and down now and then.
- Take the log you keep of your blood sugars with you when you talk with your doctor about the cause of your low blood sugar.
- Ask the doctor what changes need to be made in your plan of care.

A1c Testing

- Hemoglobin A1c is a blood test that shows your average or overall blood sugar levels for the past 3 to 4 months.
- Hemoglobin is the part of the red blood cells that carries oxygen throughout your body.



- Sugar in your blood attaches to the hemoglobin and stays there for the life of that red blood cell.
- The sugar-hemoglobin part of the red blood cell is called the A1c.
- The A1c measures the percent of hemoglobin that has sugar attached to it. This test, and the finger-stick blood test you do each day at home, helps you manage your diabetes during pregnancy.

- The blood tests done when you see your doctor also help you manage your diabetes during pregnancy.
- During your pregnancy, your doctor may check your A1c every 6 weeks to help with your blood sugar control.
- The normal range for hemoglobin is generally from 4% to 6% for people without diabetes.
- It is important that you keep an A1c level of less than 6% during pregnancy.
- Good blood sugar control means fewer problems for people with diabetes.
- When you get your A1c results, your doctor will talk with you about your blood sugar control.
- Your doctor will tell you what steps are needed to improve your diabetes.

Morning Sickness and Diabetes

- 70% of all pregnant women get morning sickness.
- It can occur at any time of the day or night.
- It usually happens between the 6th and 12th week of pregnancy.

- If you are a pregnant woman and have diabetes:
 - This nausea and vomiting with morning sickness can make blood sugar control a big problem.
 - Making changes in food choices usually solves any problems.
 - Women who had diabetes before they became pregnant may have to make changes in the way they eat, the insulin they take, and in their testing so they can treat the nausea and vomiting.

Here are some simple tips for managing morning sickness:

- Eat 6 small meals each day.
- Eat every 2½ to 3 hours.
- Keep low-fat crackers, rice cakes, or dry cereal at your bedside.
- Eat a snack such as cheese and crackers or half a sandwich before going to bed.
- Do not eat spicy foods, fatty foods, or caffeine.
- Do not eat any food that causes nausea.
- Drink liquids between meals, not with meals.
- Eat slowly and relax.
- Take vitamins after dinner or at bedtime.
- Do not make sudden changes in body position.
- Stand up slowly and get out of bed slowly in the morning.
- Write down all the foods you eat and things you do to find out what things might cause nausea or vomiting.
- Always carry food with you like low-fat crackers, rice cakes, or dry cereal to treat nausea or low blood sugar.
- If smells bother you, try the following:

Stay away from strong perfumes, household cleaning products, or coffee pots left on too long.
Ask someone else to do the cooking and grocery shopping.
Try eating cold foods because they have less odor than hot foods.
Get some fresh air.
Try smelling pieces of lemon.

There are many types of foods that women like when they have morning sickness.

- Some like salty foods.
- Some like sour foods.

Here is a list of foods you might substitute for one carbohydrate portion when you eat:

SALTY FOODS	BLAND FOODS
6 saltine crackers	1/3 cup of rice
3/4 ounce or 80 calories worth of pretzels	1/2 cup of pasta
1 ounce of potato chips or tortilla chips	1 small baked potato
1 cup of soup	1/2 cup of mashed potatoes
12 ounces of tomato juice	1/2 cup of cooked cereal
3 cups of salted popcorn	3/4 cup of dry cereal
BITTER OR SOUR FOODS	
1/2 cup of lemonade	1/4 cup of regular pudding
1/2 cup of grapefruit juice	1/2 cup of regular caffeine-free soda
1 small sour apple	1/2 cup of unsweetened applesauce
1 ounce of salt and vinegar potato chips	1 small banana
1/2 cup of sugar-free pudding	

Foods that may be less likely to cause nausea that are proteins are:

- Chicken
- Turkey
- Ham
- Cheese, cottage cheese, ricotta cheese
- Eggs

Low blood sugar before your meal is often the cause of nausea.

- Eat frequent meals.
- Have a bedtime snack.
- Check your blood sugar often to avoid low blood sugar.
- If one of these helps, talk to your doctor about changing your insulin amount or the time that you take it.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU VOMIT AFTER MEALS OR CANNOT STOP VOMITING
If you are taking insulin and vomit after eating, your doctor may have suggestions for you:

- Try a liquid source of carbohydrate.
- Once the vomiting has stopped, try to eat your meal.
- Take a small dose of glucagon (0.15mg).
- You may need to repeat every 1 to 2 hours until the peak of the short-acting insulin has declined.
- It is important to check your blood sugar and urine ketones often.
- Call your doctor if your vomiting does not stop.
- If your vomiting continues for 12 hours or more, you may need to stay in the hospital to prevent any further problems.

Sick Day Guidelines

- You must take care of your diabetes when you are sick:
 - “Sick” means you have a fever, nausea and vomiting, diarrhea, a cold, or sinus infection.



Ask someone to stay with you.

- Your blood sugar may rise, even if you are not eating or are vomiting.
- Continue to check your blood sugar when you are ill.

You are never too sick to check your blood sugar and urine ketones.

- **Test your blood sugar at least every 2 to 4 hours.**
 - Check it more often if you are not sure how you are doing.
 - Write down the results in your log.

- **If you are able to eat, follow your normal meal plan plus:**
 - Drink lots of sugar-free liquids, at least 8 ounces (1 cup) every hour.
 - Sip the liquids slowly over the hour.
 - If you cannot eat your usual food, try crackers, gelatin, clear soup, Popsicles®, or unsweetened applesauce.
 - If you are vomiting, try to drink something with sugar in it such as ginger ale, regular soda (not diet), clear soup, decaffeinated tea, water, or Gatorade®.

- **Call your doctor when:**
 - Your blood sugar is less than 65 mg/dl or more than 160 mg/dl twice in a row, or your urine ketones are moderate or large.
 - Your illness goes on for more than 24 hours and doesn't get better.
 - Your temperature is higher than 100° F.
 - You vomit more than once in 6 hours.
 - You have diarrhea more than 5 times a day or it lasts longer than 12 hours.
 - You feel sleepier or weaker than usual or you cannot think clearly.
 - You have trouble breathing.
 - You cannot keep any fluids down.
 - You are not sure you can take care of yourself.
- **Tell a family member that you are sick.**
- **Ask someone to stay with you.**
- **When you call your doctor, he will ask you:**
 - Your temperature.
 - Your symptoms (vomiting, diarrhea, pain, etc.).
 - Your blood sugar levels during the time you have been sick.
 - A list of foods and fluids you have eaten/drunk.
 - A list of any medicines (cough syrup, pain relievers, etc.) you have taken.
 - How long you have been sick.
 - Any questions or concerns you have.

If you must go to the hospital or the emergency room, tell the doctors and nurses that you have diabetes.

Diabetes during Pregnancy Managed by Diet

Follow all of the above guidelines plus:

- Test urine ketones every time you test your blood glucose.
- Sometimes insulin is needed for a short time to bring blood glucose down.

Diabetes Managed by Insulin

Follow all the above guidelines plus:

- Take your normal amount of insulin.
 - You still need it, even if you are not eating or are vomiting.
 - You may need extra amounts of insulin to bring your blood sugar down.

- If your blood sugar continues to go up or vomiting continues after you have taken an extra amount of insulin, GO TO THE EMERGENCY ROOM.
- If you have difficulty breathing, it can be a sign of diabetic ketoacidosis.
 - This is an emergency medical condition and requires emergency room treatment.
 - Ask a family member or friend to call 911.

Tell the emergency room staff that you have diabetes and if you are taking insulin.

Diabetes Managed by Insulin Pump

Follow all the above guidelines plus:

- If your blood glucose reading is over 180 mg/dl twice in a row:
 - Change your pump site, needle, tubing, and syringe (reservoir).
 - Check your urine for ketones.
 - Give your sliding scale (correction factor) insulin by separate syringe.
 - Continue to retest your blood glucose every hour after giving a correction factor dose.
 - Increase your fluid intake.

Infections and Diabetes

- Infections are more common and more serious when your diabetes is not well controlled.
- High blood sugar levels help germs grow and hurt your body's ability to fight off infection.
- Healthy habits are important to control your diabetes.
- Women get more urinary tract infections (UTIs).
- Germs can travel into the bladder.
- E. coli is a common germ that causes most UTIs.
- UTIs are even more common in women with diabetes.
- When your kidneys are removing extra sugar from your blood, they dump it into your bladder to be sent out of your body in your urine.
- The germs feed on the sugar and can eventually cause an infection.
- Pregnant women have more UTIs because the baby is pressing on the bladder and stops the bladder from emptying out all the urine.
- When a UTI or bladder infection is not treated, it can become a kidney infection, which is quite serious.

- Your doctor can do a urine test to see if you have an infection.
- Your doctor will tell you what medicine to take.

If you have a UTI, you may notice some or all of the following signs:

Burning or pain while you urinate
Urinating more often than usual
Feeling like you need to urinate but can't
Cloudy or bloody urine
Pain in the lower part of your stomach and/or back
Fever

- When you are pregnant, you may get more vaginal yeast infections.
- Pregnancy changes the vagina, making it easier for bacteria to grow there.
- Pregnant women with diabetes have yeast infections if their blood sugars are high for long periods of the time.

Look for any of the following signs if you think you may have a vaginal yeast infection:

- Vaginal itching and/or burning;
- Thick, white, cheesy discharge; and/or
- Pain when you urinate.

Do not ignore small problems; they may become bigger problems.

- Do not try to treat the infection yourself.
- The doctor will tell you how to treat the infection.

Good health habits are important for everyone, with or without diabetes.

Here are some helpful tips to follow:

- Keep blood sugar levels within the range your doctor tells you.
- After you finish urinating, wipe from front to back.
 - This will keep germs from the rectal area from spreading to your vagina.
- Empty your bladder every 4 to 5 hours.
 - Holding your urine increases the risk of infection.
- Urinate before and after sex.
- Wear cotton underwear, loose pants, and loose clothing.
- Learn to notice the early signs of infection.
 - Tell your doctor if you notice signs of anything unusual.
 - Do not wait if you think something is wrong.
 - It is important to treat infections early.
 - Make sure you understand test results.
 - Ask questions if you don't understand the treatment.
 - Ask how long it will take to heal.
 - Talk to your doctor about how you can keep from getting the infection again.
 - Review what the doctor tells you to improve your control and stay healthy.




Positive and challenging events like a marriage, a new baby, or a new job can also cause a stress response.

Stress and Diabetes

- Stress can make you feel unsure of yourself, afraid, or very sad.
 - What is stressful for you may not be stressful for someone else.
 - You may have things happening in your life that change how you feel.
- Something may bother you one day and not bother you at all the next day.
 - Everyone has stress from time to time.
 - Good things and bad things can be stressful.
 - Bad things like illness or a death in the family can cause stress for everyone.
 - Good things like marriage, a new baby, holidays, vacations, or a new job can also cause stress.

- Minor things like work deadlines, heavy traffic, phone calls, or doctor visits can also cause stress.
- Too much stress or physical pressure can lead to health problems.
 - Your diabetes can be hard to control.
 - Your body cannot fight the disease as well.
- **Learn to handle stress in a good way so you can lead a happy life.**
- Your body deals with stress by releasing special hormones that can:
 - Cause your heart to beat faster.
 - Make your blood pressure go up.
 - Make your breathing fast and shallow.
 - Cause your blood sugar to rise.
- Sometimes the symptoms of stress and hypoglycemia are alike.

<p>Learn to handle stress in a good way so you can lead a healthy life.</p>	
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- **Stress makes it hard to manage your diabetes.**
 - In a person who does not have diabetes, the insulin that is made by the pancreas prevents blood sugar levels from rising too high.

- In a person with diabetes, the pancreas may not make enough insulin and blood sugar levels (and ketones for type 1 diabetes) may get too high.
- Some people may have a drop in blood sugar as the 1st response to stress.
- Some people may have blood sugar and ketone levels that go back and forth between high and low.
- Short-lived stress that happens a lot may cause blood sugar and ketone levels to bounce quite a bit.
- Some people say they are not able to deal with stress because they have diabetes.
- Their energy that should be used for dealing with stress is being used up on diabetes.
- It is harder to deal with stress when blood sugar is out of control.

- **Everyone responds to stress in different ways.**
- It is important to have different ways to deal with different events.
- If you find one way of coping with stress makes you feel tense, tired, angry, or sick, try a something else until you feel relaxed.
- Some ways people cope with stress are not good: These habits can cause other problems:
 - Eating too much.
 - Smoking more.
 - Drinking too much.
 - Abusing drugs.
- **Learn to handle stress in a good way so you can lead a healthy life.**
Learning different ways of coping and being able to change can lower the effects of stress on your health.

The following are some tips for managing stress:

How do you handle stress?

- For 3 to 4 days write down what stress happened in your life.
 - How did you act when the stressful event happened?
 - How did you feel during and after the event?
 - What were your blood sugar levels during and after the event?
 - Pay attention to your stress levels and how you handle them.
 - You can learn what works best for you to lower or avoid stressful events.
- Try to do less when you are stressed.
 - Are you doing too much?
 - At home?
 - At work?
 - In your town?
 - Write down a list of everything you do every day.
 - Are there things on your list that you can let someone else do?
 - Take time just for you each day.

Relieve stress with meditation, yoga, biofeedback, deep breathing, and visual imagery.



- Are you thinking too much about your diabetes or other things in your life?
 - What you think about can affect how you feel and how you act.
 - You may view diabetes as something you cannot fix.
 - You may see diabetes as something you can make better.
- The healthy approach is to stay away from as many stressful events as you can.
 - Think about how you will deal with them in a positive way.
- Find a new way to deal with stress.
 - The energy you use on stress can be used in other ways:
 - Daily exercise makes you feel good.
 - Try walking, swimming, or biking.
 - Exercise also gives you more strength to deal with problems.
 - Find hobbies to do.
 - Write in a diary, talk with friends, join a support group.
- Learn new ways to relax.
 - Meditation, yoga, biofeedback, deep breathing, and visual imagery help you relax.
 - They get rid of tension by telling your muscles to relax.
 - These methods are usually done in a quiet, comfortable place where you will not be disturbed by the phone or other people.
 - There are books that tell you how to cope with diabetes and stress.
 - Look for classes in your town to help you learn these methods.
 - Massage therapy can be helpful to ease muscle tension, improve circulation, and lower heart rate and blood pressure.
 - It can relax your whole body.
 - Releasing muscle tension through massage can help ease emotional stress.
 - Look for a licensed massage therapist in your town.
- Keep your sense of humor.
 - Laughter is like a *massage on your insides*.
 - It releases endorphins and helps to decrease stress levels.
- Support groups can be helpful.
 - Sometimes just being with people who have problems like yours helps.
 - Talking about problems can help you solve them.
- Make a list of what things are stressful for you.
 - How do you feel when stressful things happen?
 - How does it affect your diabetes control?

- How do you tell the difference between how you respond to stress and the way you react to low blood sugar?
- Try to find some new ways for coping with stress.
- Ask your doctor to refer you to someone who helps people with diabetes or stress management in general.

Testing during Your Pregnancy

- There are several tests that can be done to see how your pregnancy is going.

TRIPLE SCREEN, MATERNAL ALPHA-FETOPROTEIN (MSAFP)

- This is a test done with your blood between the 15th and 18th week of pregnancy.
 - It screens for certain problems in the baby.
 - If the results are too high or too low, you may need more testing.

ULTRASOUND

- This is a painless exam done by passing a sensor over your belly to make a picture with sound waves of your uterus and the baby.

AMNIOCENTESIS

- A small amount of amniotic fluid is taken from around the baby with a very thin needle.
 - The needle goes through your belly and into your uterus.
 - The doctor uses the ultrasound picture to help with this test.
 - The fluid can be tested to find a genetic problem or a birth defect.
 - The test is done between the 15th and 20th week.
 - The results are usually back to the doctor in 2 weeks.
 - This test may be done later in pregnancy to see if your baby's lungs have grown enough for the baby to breathe on its own.

FETAL KICK COUNT

- This is the way your doctor checks to see how often your baby moves.
 - Babies sleep and wake just like you do.
 - You should know how much your baby moves and let your doctor know if you notice any changes.

NON-STRESS TEST (NST)

- This test monitors your baby's heart rate, movements, and any uterine contractions you may be having.
 - A fetal monitor is used.

- It is usually done in the last 1/3 of your pregnancy.
- It may be done once or twice a week.

BIOPHYSICAL PROFILE (BPP)

- This test uses ultrasound and an outside fetal monitor.
- It tells the doctor about how each baby is doing.
- 5 different areas are measured, and each is given a score. The scores are added together.
- The test does not hurt your babies.
- The test can be repeated as many times as your doctor thinks it should be.
- The test measures 5 elements; each element receives a score of “0” or “2.”
A score of 8-10 is normal. The test measures:
 - Baby’s breathing movements
 - Baby’s body movements
 - Baby’s muscle tone
 - Non-stress test (NST)
 - Amniotic fluid volume

Labor and Delivery and After You Deliver

- Your doctor will watch your pregnancy very closely.
- Most women with diabetes will go into labor by themselves.
 - They usually give birth vaginally.
 - But some women will have their labor induced early.
 - Depending on the status of your diabetes, you may need to have small amounts of insulin given to you during labor.

BREASTFEEDING

- There is usually no problem with breastfeeding your infant.
- It is a great way to help you bond with your baby.
- Breast milk gives the baby protection against infection.
 - It is always ready, and it is free.
 - Breastfeeding your baby for at least 3 months may help prevent your baby from getting type 1 diabetes.
 - If you cannot or do not want to breast feed, do not feel bad.
 - Formulas available today have enough nutrients to help your baby grow.
 - If you are breastfeeding, it is very important to eat a healthy diet and drink plenty of fluids.

- Your doctor or dietician will tell you what type of diet you should be eating.
- Your doctor may change the amount of insulin you are taking after your baby is born.

In Conclusion

A pregnancy with diabetes is a high-risk pregnancy.

- It is important for you to keep your blood sugar as close to normal as you can.
- Keeping your blood sugar within the target range can reduce problems.
- Keep a balance between food, exercise, and insulin (if needed).
- Keep normal blood sugar levels as your goal for a healthy pregnancy and birth.
- Keep all your doctor appointments.
- Ask for help with your meal plan, blood sugar checks, exercise plan, and any other concerns.
- Check your blood sugar as the doctor told you to.
- Watch to see if your food, exercise, and insulin (if taken) keep your blood sugar levels in the target range.
- Stick with the meal plan your doctor advises.
- Ask your doctor about the best exercise program for you.
- Take all your medicines when you are supposed to.
- Know how each medicine works and what the side effects may be.
- **You need to check your blood sugar often if you have diabetes.**
- By checking your blood sugar, you will know if your blood sugar levels are okay with your diet or if you need to start insulin.
- Checking your blood sugar and following a meal plan helps you:
 - Control blood sugar levels.
 - Help your baby to grow.
 - Lower the risk of having a large baby.

It is very important to keep your blood sugar as close to normal as you can.

It is very important to talk with your doctor when something is not right.

Your healthcare team is there to help you understand your condition and make the best health care choices for you and your baby.