



UNDERSTANDING DIABETES

With nearly one in twelve Americans affected, chances are good that you or someone you know has diabetes. Yet, most Americans do not understand what diabetes is or how they can reduce their risk of developing this disease.

What is Diabetes?

Diabetes occurs when blood glucose (sugar) levels are higher than they should be. Most of the food we eat is turned into glucose so that our bodies can use it for energy. However, in order for our body's cells to use this form of energy, they require insulin.

Insulin is a hormone that is produced by the pancreas. This hormone is necessary for the blood glucose to enter the cells of the body. If the pancreas does not produce enough insulin, or if the body cannot properly use the insulin, a person is said to be diabetic. Although there is no cure for diabetes, medication for treating this disease does exist.

Types of Diabetes

Basically, diabetes is divided into two categories, type 1 and type 2. Type 1 diabetes is often called juvenile or insulin-dependent diabetes. It develops because the pancreas cannot produce the needed amount of insulin that the body requires.

Although this form of the disease usually occurs in children and in young adults, it can develop at any age. Individuals with type 1 diabetes must have insulin delivered by injection or pump in order to survive. At present, there is no known way to prevent type 1 diabetes.



Type 2 diabetes is often called adult-onset or non-insulin-dependent diabetes. It is much more common than type 1 diabetes and it usually develops because the cells cannot properly absorb the glucose.

Individuals with type 2 diabetes can often control their blood glucose levels by exercising, healthy eating, shedding excess weight and taking oral medications. Risk factors for type 2 diabetes include aging, family history of diabetes, impaired glucose tolerance, obesity, sedentary lifestyle, gestational diabetes and race/ethnicity.

In the past, type 2 diabetes usually occurred to sedentary and obese individuals who were

over 40 years old. Now, as the sedentary and obesity epidemic in America has exploded, younger adults and even children are being diagnosed with this disease at record numbers.

Pre-Diabetes

There is also a condition called pre-diabetes. This is a situation in which individuals have blood glucose levels that are higher than normal but not high enough to be classified as diabetes. People with pre-diabetes have an increased risk of developing diabetes. They also have a greater risk of having a heart attack or a stroke.

There are people with pre-diabetes who never get diabetes. They do this by being physically active and keeping their weight in the normal range. This type of lifestyle can postpone or even prevent the onset of diabetes.



However, a greater number of people with pre-diabetes are sedentary and overweight. Such a lifestyle for a pre-diabetic often leads to diabetes.

It should be noted that not everyone who is overweight or obese gets diabetes. That is because obesity in itself does not cause diabetes. However, if you are pre-diabetic, obesity can cause the diabetes to “kick-in.”

Another condition is referred to as gestational diabetes. This is a form of glucose intolerance that occurs to some women during their pregnancy. Women who have had gestational diabetes have an increased chance of developing diabetes (usually type 2) later in life.

Gestational diabetes is more common if a pregnant woman is obese or has a family history of diabetes but it can also occur to pregnant women without these risk factors. To reduce the risk of complications to the baby, women with this condition should be under a doctor’s care.

Why worry about diabetes?

Besides being a serious health concern by itself, diabetes can lead to other serious health problems. Adults with diabetes are more than twice as likely to die from a

heart attack or a stroke compared to adults without diabetes.

In addition, diabetics are more likely to...

- go blind
- have foot or leg amputations
- have kidney failure
- get periodontal (gum) disease



How do you know if you have diabetes?

Your doctor can tell you if you have pre-diabetes or diabetes with a simple blood test. However, some warning signs or symptoms of diabetes include...

- Excessive thirst
- Frequent urination
- Unexplained weight loss
- Sudden vision changes
- Sores that do not heal

There may be other symptoms as well so to be safe, you should discuss this with your doctor.

What is the outlook?

At present, there isn’t a cure for diabetes. However, by leading a healthy lifestyle and taking the prescribed medication, individuals with this disease can lead a normal life. Professional athletes with diabetes are able to perform at a high level by monitoring their glucose levels and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Certainly, diabetics who do not have such a physical demand on their body (like professional athletes) should be able to do the same.

As Americans, we need to take more responsibility for our health. In addition to helping us to live a longer life, a healthy lifestyle will enable us to maintain a higher quality of life.

We need to work more toward preventing lifestyle diseases rather than treating them after-the-fact.

Helpful Websites

American Diabetes Association

National Institutes of Health

National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute

Medline Plus

Center for Disease Control

www.diabetes.org

www.nih.gov

www.nhlbi.nih.gov

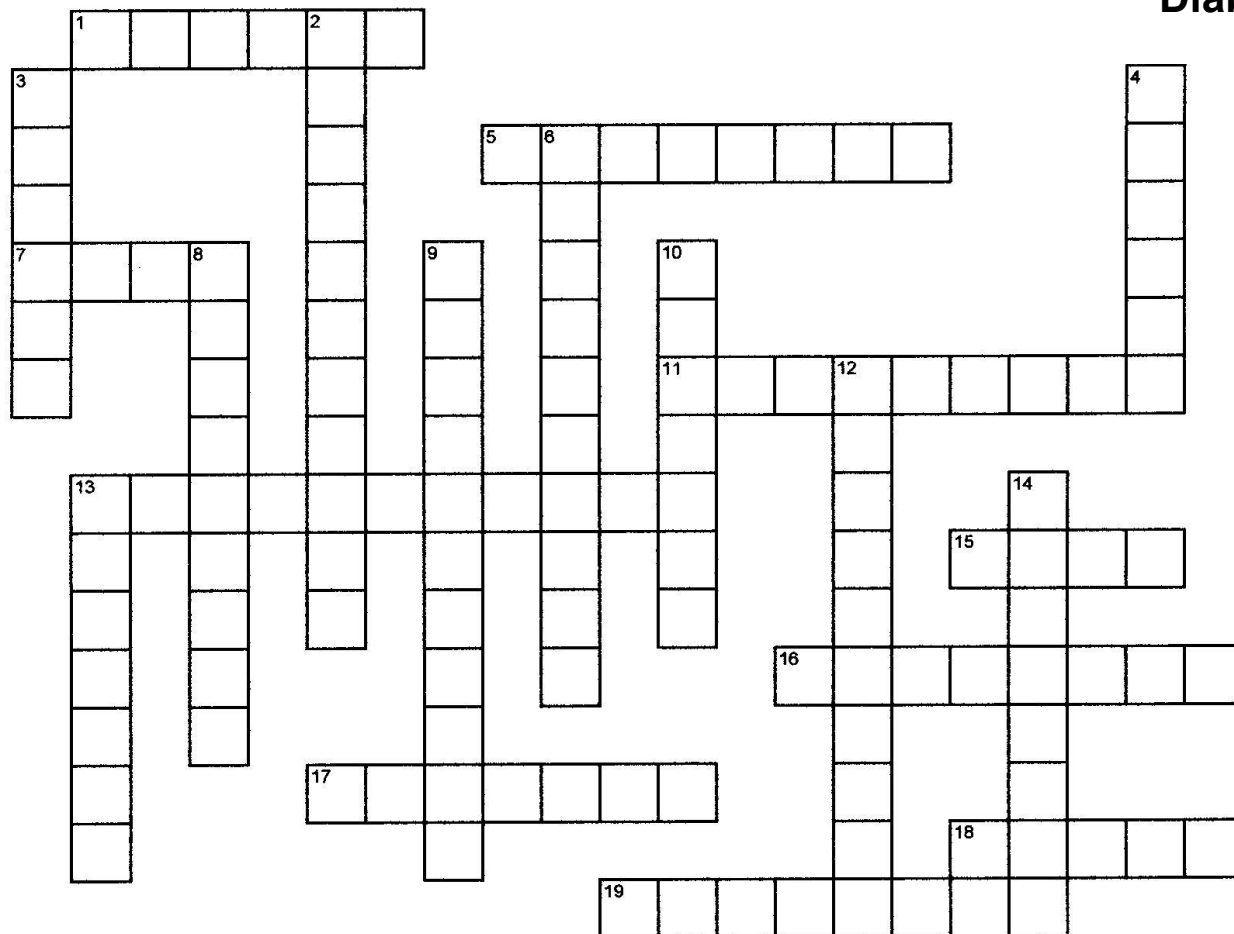
www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/

www.cdc.gov

NOTICE: Although the above websites have been operational for years, as you know, that could change tomorrow. If that is the case, simply Google the organization for a revised address.

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Diabetes



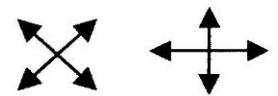
Across

- 1 One warning sign of diabetes is unexplained _____ loss.
- 5 Insulin is a hormone that is produced by the _____.
- 7 Individuals with type 2 diabetes often take _____ medications.
- 11 One risk factor for type 2 diabetes is a _____ lifestyle.
- 13 Some women who are pregnant may develop _____ diabetes.
- 15 Type 1 diabetics must have insulin delivered by injection or _____ in order to survive.
- 16 A person with diabetes is called a _____.
- 17 If you have pre-diabetes, _____ can cause the diabetes to "kick-in."
- 18 You can tell if you have diabetes with a simple _____ test.
- 19 Most of the food we eat is turned into glucose so that our bodies can use it for _____.

Down

- 2 People with diabetes have a greater risk of having a _____.
- 3 Type 2 diabetes usually develops because the cells cannot _____ the glucose properly.
- 4 Diabetics are more likely to develop _____ failure.
- 6 Type 2 diabetes is often called _____ or non-insulin-dependent diabetes.
- 8 A healthy _____ can postpone the onset of diabetes.
- 9 People with _____ have an increased risk of developing diabetes.
- 10 Our bodies need _____ in order for the cells to use the blood glucose.
- 12 Individuals with type 2 diabetes can often control their blood glucose levels by _____.
- 13 Diabetes occurs when blood _____ levels are higher than they should be.
- 14 Type 1 diabetes is often called _____ or insulin-dependent diabetes.

Diabetes



L L P T V G C I M E D I P E Y V O R Z Q E N
 F W K A D U L T O N S E T T T W Y Q F X K P
 W P K I H F A M I L Y H I S T O R Y C M C M
 H A D W D T Y Q W D K L T E H L N E H N C F
 T N I T T N N N I V I E P Y T V S Y M M E R
 V C S F S Z E A D B A Y S T T S J E P L D K
 B R E H B E B Y I I T M R I W I D L Y T H M
 L E A M X E T S F W A I P E C I S T X Y B L
 O A S G T K N D N A S B I U C R S E K P L A
 O S E I J O C R O K I G E A T E E L B E O T
 D W C L P Q S A I O H L T T F A E X R O O N
 G M R S N N M K T T L I U I E S T S E N D O
 L M E W P O O E A T O B L R O S E I E E S D
 U R C B R I T L C N A R C N E T K N O H U O
 C Z L G E T P I I C N T G K E H O L T N G I
 O E K E V C M N D V E A R B G M H L L R A R
 S S R K E E Y E E B I L A A R R A H X F R E
 E O T O N J S V M D K I L O E E F P Z Z T P
 M C K R T N B U L N D T H S H H A C T I V E
 H U J T I I L J A E L A N O I T A T S E G N
 V L P S O F T F R Q P T H G I E W R E V O X
 R G K Z N V G P O Q S E D E N T A R Y L L Z

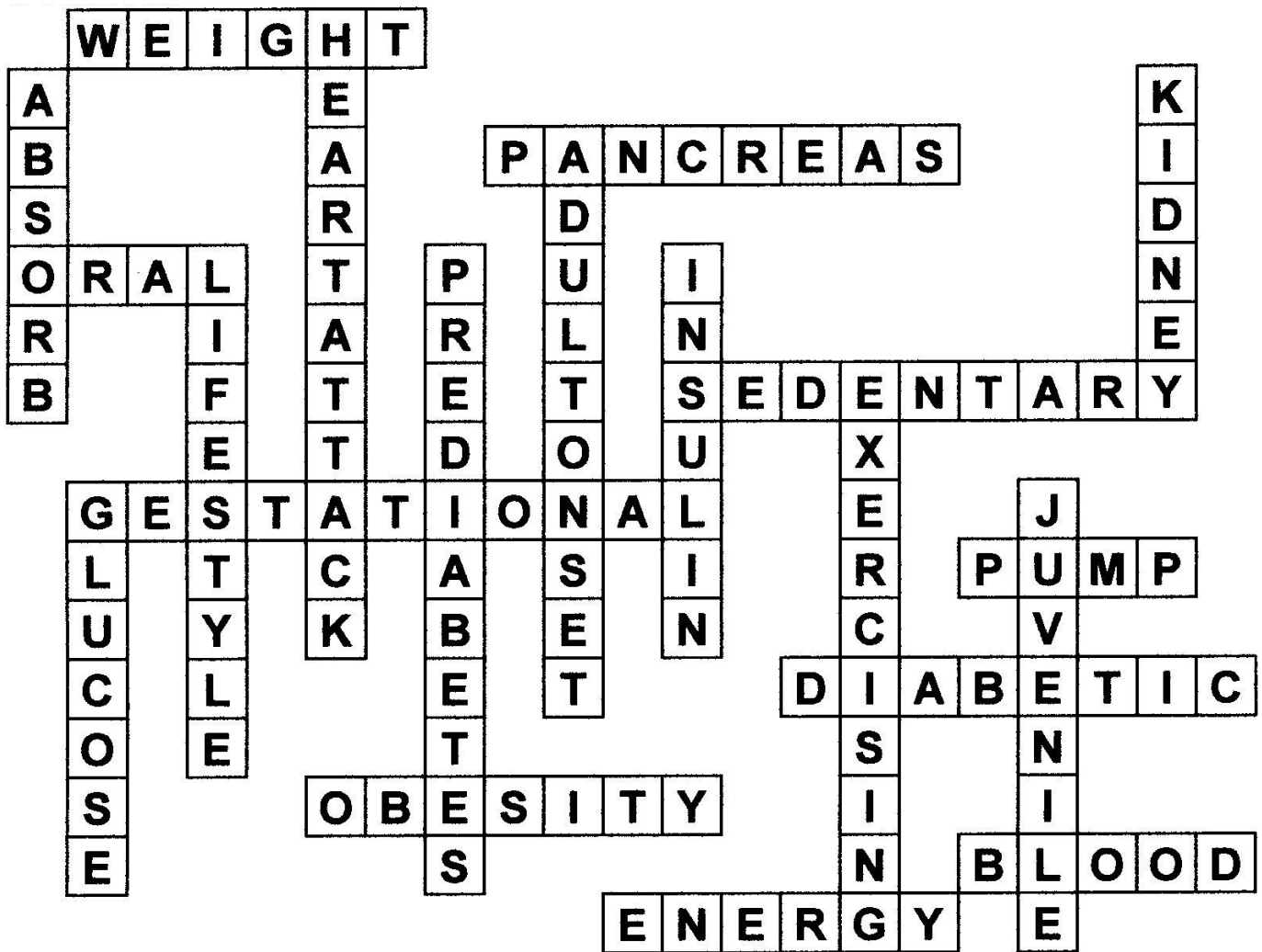
Active
 Adult onset
 Amputation
 Blood glucose
 Blood sugar
 Blood test
 Cells
 Diabetes
 Diabetic
 Diagnosis

Disease
 Epidemic
 Excess weight
 Exercise
 Family history
 Gestational
 Glucose
 Health
 Heart attack
 Hormone

Injection
 Juvenile
 Kidney failure
 Lifestyle
 Medication
 Obesity
 Oral medication
 Overweight
 Pancreas
 Periodontal

Prediabetes
 Prevention
 Responsibility
 Risk
 Sedentary
 Stroke
 Symptoms
 Type one
 Type two

Crossword Puzzle Answer Key



Word Search Puzzle Answer Key

L L P T V G C I M E D I P E Y V O R Z Q E N
F W K A D U L T O N S E T T T W Y Q F X K P
W P K I H F A M I L Y H I S T O R Y C M C M
H A D W D T Y Q W D K L T E H L N E H N C F
T N I T T N N N I V I E P Y T V S Y M M E R
V C S F S Z E A D B A Y S T T S J E P L D K
B R E H B E B Y I I T M R I W I D L Y T H M
L E A M X E T S F W A I P E C I S T X Y B L A
O A S G T K N D N A S B I U C R S E K P L A
O S E I J O C R O K I G E A T E E L B E O T
D W C L P Q S A I O H L T T F A E X R O O N
G M R S N N M K T T L I U I E S T S E N D O
L M E W P O O E A T O B L R O S E I E E S D
U R C B R I T L C N A R C N E T K N O H U O
C Z L G E T P I I C N T G K E H O L T N G I
O E K E V C M N D V E A R B G M H L L R A R E
S S R K E E Y E E B I L A A R R A H X F R E
E O T O N J S V M D K I L O E E F P Z Z T P
M C K R T N B U L N D T H S H H A C T I V E
H U J T I I L J A E L A N O I T A T S E G N
V L P S O F T F R Q P T H G I E W R E V O X
R G K Z N V G P O Q S E D E N T A R Y L L Z