

# All things blood sugar

## Novant Health Employer Solutions

### Understand blood glucose

The first step to managing your blood sugar is to understand what makes blood sugar levels rise.

**Glucose:** The carbohydrates and sugars in what you eat and drink turn into glucose (sugar) in the stomach and digestive system. Glucose can then enter the bloodstream.

**Insulin:** Insulin is a hormone made in the pancreas that helps the body's cells take up glucose from blood and lower blood sugar levels. In Type 2 diabetes, glucose builds up in the blood instead of going into cells because:

- The body develops "insulin resistance" and can't use the insulin it makes efficiently.
- The pancreas gradually loses its ability to produce insulin.

The result can be a high blood glucose level.

### Track your levels

Health care professionals can take blood glucose readings and provide recommendations. If you're diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes, you will need to monitor your blood sugar level regularly.

### Fasting blood glucose level, diagnosis and what it means

- **Lower than 100 mg/dl:** Normal – healthy range
- **100 to 125 mg/dl:** Prediabetes (impaired fasting glucose) – increased risk of developing diabetes
- **126 mg/dl or higher:** Diabetes mellitus (Type 2 diabetes) – increased risk of heart disease or stroke

### Tips for success

**Eat smart:** Eat a healthy diet of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans, legumes, nuts, plant-based proteins, lean animal proteins like fish and seafood. Limit sugary foods and drinks, red or processed meats, salty foods, refined carbohydrates and highly processed foods.

**Move more:** Being physically active can lower your risk of developing diabetes and help you manage the disease if you already have it.

**Manage weight:** Stay at a healthy weight to help prevent, delay or manage diabetes.

**No nicotine:** Smoking, vaping, exposure to secondhand smoke or using tobacco can increase your risk of heart disease, stroke, many cancers and other chronic diseases. It may also make prediabetes and diabetes harder to manage.