Monthly WellTips

March
American Diabetes Alert Day (March 24)

According to the American Diabetes Association, there are 23.6 million people in the United States, or 8% of the population, who have diabetes. The total prevalence of diabetes increased 13.5% from 2005-2007. Diabetes is serious, but people with this health concern can live long, healthy, happy lives.

Type 1 diabetes
In Type 1 diabetes, the body does not produce insulin. Insulin is a hormone that is needed to convert sugar (glucose), starches and other food into energy needed for daily life.

Type 2 diabetes
Type 2 diabetes is the most common form of diabetes. In Type 2 diabetes, either the body does not produce enough insulin or the cells ignore the insulin. Insulin is necessary for the body to be able to use glucose for energy.

Gestational diabetes
Pregnant women who have never had diabetes before but who have high blood sugar (glucose) levels during pregnancy are said to have gestational diabetes. We don't know what causes gestational diabetes, but we have some clues. Hormones from the placenta help the baby develop. But these hormones also block the action of the mother's insulin in her body. This problem is called insulin resistance. Insulin resistance makes it hard for the mother's body to use insulin. She may need up to three times as much insulin.

Gestational diabetes starts when your body is not able to make and use all the insulin it needs for pregnancy. Without enough insulin, glucose cannot leave the blood and be changed to energy. Glucose builds up in the blood to high levels. This is called hyperglycemia.

What should you do?
It's important for you to know your risk of developing diabetes. Certain ethnicities have a higher risk, but more important are other factors such as age, overweight and lack of physical activity. Talk to your doctor if you are concerned or if you would like to be screened for diabetes.

Diabetes Resources:
American Diabetes Association
www.diabetes.org

StayWell Online
https://uclivingwell.online.staywell.com

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