

# Pre-diabetes

Pre-diabetes is when your blood glucose level is higher than normal but not high enough to be diabetes. Pre-diabetes affects nearly 1 in 4 adults and is a risk factor for the development of type 2 diabetes.

## What causes pre-diabetes?

Risk factors for pre-diabetes and type 2 diabetes are;

- > age (eg the risk increases with ageing)
- > having a family history of diabetes
- > being above your healthy weight
- > being inactive
- > having polycystic ovarian syndrome
- > having gestational diabetes during pregnancy
- > having heart disease
- > using some medications (eg antipsychotic)
- > an Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, Pacific Islander or come from a Southern European or Asian background.

Darkening skin pigment (acanthosis nigricans), skin tags, menstrual irregularities and excessive facial and body hair (hirsutism) may also increase risk.

## How do I know I have pre-diabetes?

Pre-diabetes has no signs or symptoms. The only way to know if you have pre-diabetes is to have a blood test that checks the glucose level in your blood.

A fasting blood glucose or random blood glucose test (eg non-fasting) can be used but if these results are above the normal range, you will need to be tested further.

An oral glucose tolerance test will confirm you have pre diabetes or not.

There is no need to test insulin levels in pre-diabetes.

## What is impaired fasting glucose and impaired glucose tolerance?

Impaired fasting glucose is when the blood glucose level is higher than normal after fasting overnight but not high enough to diagnose diabetes.

Impaired glucose tolerance is when the two hour blood test is higher than normal but not high enough to diagnose diabetes.

You may have pre-diabetes due to impaired fasting glucose, impaired glucose tolerance or both.

## Do I need to act now?

Yes. Understanding the condition and working in partnership with your health professionals will improve your current health and lower your risk developing type 2 diabetes.

## What can be done?

Pre-diabetes is managed by both improving your lifestyle and using some medical treatments.

Lifestyle modifications include:

- > eating well
- > healthy weight/waist circumference
- > regular physical activity
- > managing stress
- > limiting alcohol
- > QUIT smoking.

Medical review and treatment of:

- > blood pressure
- > cholesterol
- > reviewing blood glucose at regular intervals\*.

## How often should I be tested?

If you have been diagnosed with pre-diabetes, you are at a higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes. A health review and blood glucose screening by your doctor is recommended every year.

## Where can I go for more information?

Get Healthy

[www.gethealthy.sa.gov.au](http://www.gethealthy.sa.gov.au)

Diabetes Australia

[www.diabetesaustralia.com.au](http://www.diabetesaustralia.com.au)

Dietitian Association of Australia

[www.daa.asn.au](http://www.daa.asn.au)

Department of Health

[www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)

Some councils may have healthy lifestyle programs that can help support any changes you plan to make. Ask your local council if any programs are available in the local area.

## For more information

**CHSA Diabetes Service**  
**Country Health SA LHN**  
PO Box 287, Rundle Mall  
ADELAIDE SA 5000  
Telephone: (08) 8226 7168  
[www.chsa-diabetes.org.au](http://www.chsa-diabetes.org.au)



## Where are you with your self-care?

If you have been diagnosed with pre-diabetes, use the simple checklist below to check where you are in terms of your self-care. If you answer 'no' to any of the questions, you may like to consider talking to your doctor.

How healthy is your lifestyle?		
Eating: Are you following a healthy eating plan?	YES	NO
Physical Activity: Are you active 30 minutes a day on most days of the week?	YES	NO
Weight: Are you at your most healthy weight?	YES	NO
Alcohol: Are you drinking no more than 2 standard drinks (less than 20g) a day?	YES	NO
Stress: Do you have strategies to help manage stress?	YES	NO
Smoking: Are you a non-smoker?	YES	NO
Are your health reviews on schedule?		
Blood Pressure – under 130/80	YES	NO
Cholesterol – total under 4mmol/L HDL Cholesterol – over 1.0 mmol/L LDL Cholesterol – under 2.0 mmol/L Triglycerides – under <2.0 mmol/L	YES	NO
Follow up blood glucose screening (know when it is next due) *	YES	NO
Medications (pharmacist review if needed)	YES	NO
Immunisations	YES	NO

\*Recommended every year after initial test.

## Your self-care plan

Now you can tackle the things that are not going so well. Make a list of the things you want to talk to your doctor or health professional about.
