Diabetes

Diabetes occurs when the human body does not produce insulin or uses it properly. Insulin helps your body use glucose (food converted to energy into your body’s cells). Type I must take insulin, usually occurs in childhood, but can occur any time. Type II - blood sugar controlled through weight control, regular exercise and a sensible diet. Some need insulin or oral medications.

Diabetes affects 16 million Americans. About one-half of these people do not know they have diabetes. It is the fourth leading cause of death by disease in the United States, killing more than 180,000 Americans each year.

Symptoms of diabetes: increased thirst, frequent urination (especially at night), increased appetite, unexplained weight loss, fatigue, skin infections, recurrent vaginitis, slow healing wounds, blurred vision, difficulty with erections, and tingling or numbness in hands or feet. A blood test is needed to accurately diagnose diabetes. Ask your doctor if you should eat or fast before the test.

Eat a healthful diet to help keep your blood sugar in control and maintain a healthy weight. Pay special attention to eating low-fat foods and low-salt foods. Limit the amount of sugar and sweets you eat. Do not skip meals - eat meals regularly and at the same time each day.

Getting regular aerobic exercise helps to regulate your blood sugar, reduce your risk of heart disease and control your weight. Work closely with your doctor to determine how your activity level affects your blood glucose levels and medication needs.

Some Risk Factors
- Age 40 or Over
- Overweight (20 percent more than ideal)
- Family History of Diabetes
- African-Americans, Hispanic or Native Americans

High-Risk Population
- Hispanics/Latinos 1 in 6.5
- African-Americans 1 in 8
- Anglos 1 in 12

Diabetes Test
Check the statements that describe you.

☐ I am overweight
☐ I have a brother, sister or parent who has diabetes.
☐ I am Hispanic, African-American or Native American or have one parent who is.
☐ My feet often feel numb or tingly.
☐ Sometimes my vision is blurry.
☐ When I get a cut or scratch, it seems to take forever to heal.
☐ My weight has changed a lot recently for no reason.
☐ I am often very thirsty or very hungry.
☐ I am tired a lot of the time.
☐ I have to urinate more often than usual.

Scoring your results . . .
If you checked any of the statement, you may be at risk for diabetes. The more statements you checked, the more likely you are at risk.