



MAY 15, 2024

Type 2 Diabetes

KEY POINTS

- About 1 in 10 Americans has diabetes; most have type 2.
- More children, teens, and young adults are developing type 2 diabetes than in the past.
- Type 2 diabetes can be prevented or delayed with lifestyle changes.



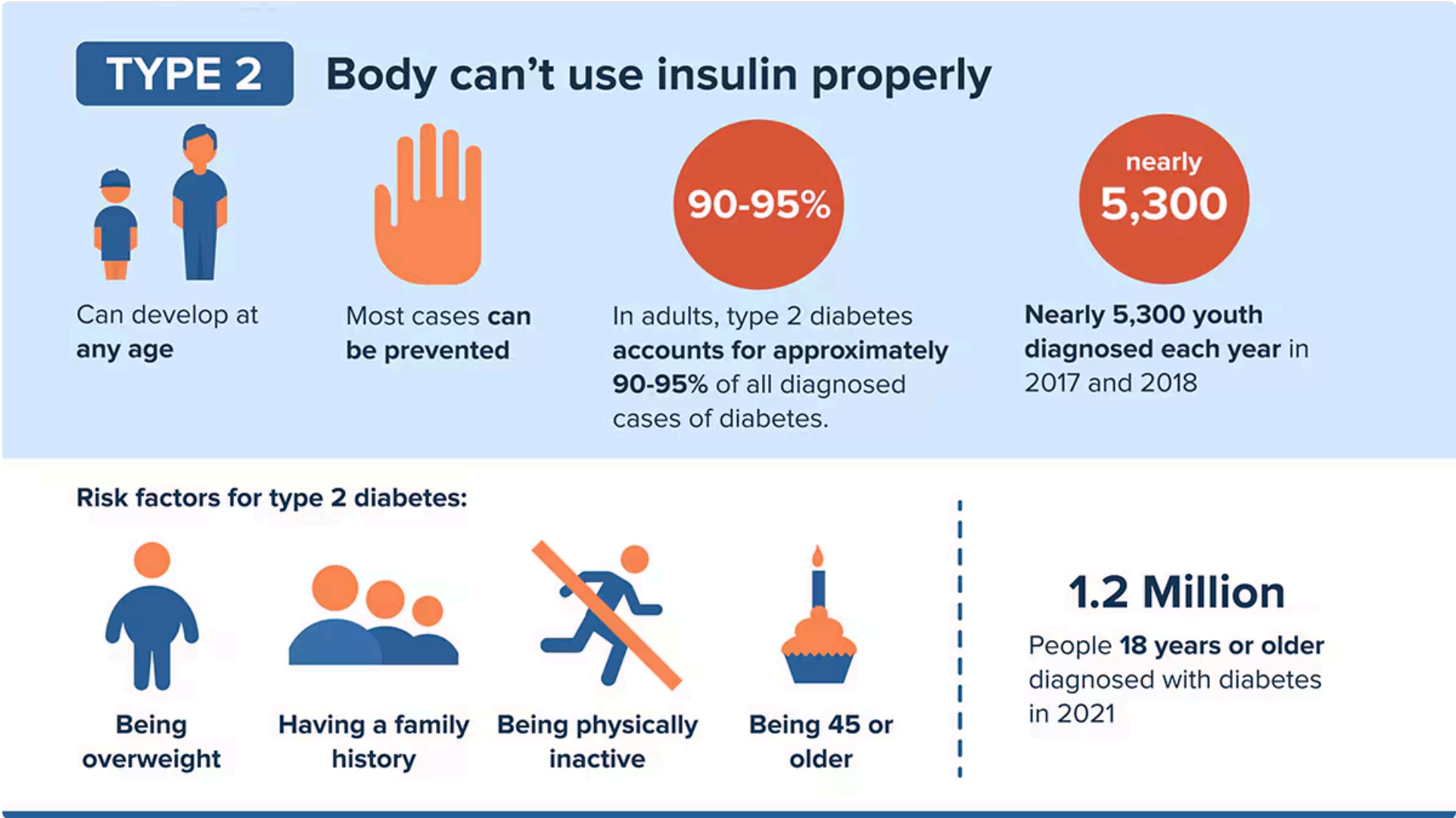
Overview

More than 38 million Americans have diabetes (about 1 in 10), and about 90% to 95% of them have type 2 diabetes. Type 2 diabetes most often develops in people 45 or older, but more and more [children, teens](#), and young adults are also developing it.

Symptoms

Type 2 diabetes [symptoms](#) often develop over several years and can go on for a long time without being noticed. Sometimes there aren't any noticeable symptoms at all.

Risk factors



- Have prediabetes.
- Have overweight.
- Are 45 or older.
- Have a parent, brother, or sister with type 2 diabetes.
- Are physically active less than 3 times a week.
- Have ever had gestational diabetes (diabetes during pregnancy) or given birth to a baby who weighed 9 pounds or more.
- Are an African American, Hispanic or Latino, American Indian, or Alaska Native person. Some Pacific Islander people and Asian American people are also at higher risk.

If you have non-alcoholic fatty liver disease you may also be at risk for type 2 diabetes.

You can prevent or delay type 2 diabetes with proven lifestyle changes. These include losing weight if you have overweight, [eating a healthy diet](#), and getting regular [physical activity](#).

Keep Reading:
[Preventing Type 2 Diabetes in Kids](#)

Causes

Insulin is a hormone made by your pancreas. It acts like a key to let blood sugar into cells in your body for use as energy. If you have type 2 diabetes, cells don't respond normally to insulin. This is called [insulin resistance](#).

Your pancreas makes more insulin to try to get cells to respond. Over time your pancreas can't keep up, and your blood sugar rises, setting the stage for [prediabetes](#) and type 2 diabetes.

High blood sugar is damaging to the body. It can cause other serious health problems, such as [heart disease](#), [vision loss](#), and [kidney disease](#).

Keep Reading:
[Prediabetes – Your Chance to Prevent Type 2 Diabetes](#)

Testing

A [simple blood test](#) will let you know if you have diabetes. If you've gotten your blood sugar tested at a health fair or pharmacy, follow up at a clinic or doctor's office to make sure the results are accurate.

Managing diabetes

Diabetes is managed mostly by you, with support from your health care team, family, and other important people in your life. Managing diabetes can be challenging, but everything you do to improve your health is worth it!

You may be able to [manage your diabetes](#) with healthy eating and being active. Or your doctor may prescribe insulin or other diabetes medicines to help manage your blood sugar and avoid [complications](#). You'll still need to eat healthy and be active if you take insulin or other medicines.

Ask your doctor how often to [check your blood sugar](#) and what your target blood sugar levels should be. Keeping your blood sugar levels close to target will help you prevent or delay diabetes complications.

Stress is a part of life, but it can make managing diabetes harder. Regular physical activity, getting enough sleep, and relaxation exercises can help. Talk to your doctor and diabetes educator about these and other ways you can manage stress.

Make regular appointments with your health care team to be sure you're on track with your treatment plan. You can also find out about new ideas and strategies if needed.

Whether you were just diagnosed or have had diabetes for some time, meeting with a diabetes educator for support and guidance is a great idea.

SOURCES

CONTENT SOURCE:

National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion; Diabetes