




# GESTATIONAL DIABETES

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There are three types of diabetes:  
gestational, Type 1, and Type 2.  
Gestational diabetes means that you  
have elevated blood sugar during your  
pregnancy but not at other times. It is

caused by a resistance to insulin, which helps to absorb your blood glucose. This condition, which occurs in approximately 2-5% of pregnancies, generally resolves following delivery.

## *How does gestational diabetes affect you?*

If you have gestational diabetes, it could cause:

- ◇ High blood pressure
- ◇ Infections
- ◇ Pre-eclampsia
- ◇ Loss of pregnancy
- ◇ Needing a C-section

- ◇ Birth defects
- ◇ Premature birth
- ◇ Being diagnosed as having Type 2 diabetes after giving birth

## *How does gestational diabetes affect your baby?*

If you have gestational diabetes, your baby could be at higher risk for:

- ◇ Rapidly fluctuating blood sugar levels
- ◇ Jaundice
- ◇ Breathing problems

- ◇ Injury during natural birth, since your baby may be heavier
- ◇ Being overweight

## RISK FACTORS

If you have any of these characteristics or conditions, you have an increased risk for developing gestational diabetes.

That doesn't mean that you necessarily will have gestational diabetes. To catch the condition early, you should speak with your doctor if you are at all concerned.

- ◇ Overweight (BMI  $\geq 25$ )
- ◇ Older than 25 years



- ◇ Native American
- ◇ Generally inactive or not exercising
- ◇ History of high blood sugar during pregnancy
- ◇ Previously gave birth to a large

baby (> 8 lbs., 13 oz.)

- ◇ History of still birth, miscarriage, or birth defects
- ◇ Excess amniotic fluid surrounding your baby
- ◇ An abnormal amount of sugar in your urine (glycosuria)
- ◇ Family history of diabetes

If you have a familial or personal history of diabetes/gestational diabetes, you should ask your doctor to be screened. Screening involves drinking a glucose solution and getting a blood test afterwards. More information on this

test is in the "Prenatal Tests" page.

*If you're worried you may have gestational diabetes, talk to your doctor about getting screened and managing the condition. Only your doctor can confirm whether or not you have this condition.*

To maintain lower weight during pregnancy:

- ◇ Monitor blood glucose levels and blood pressure frequently.
- ◇ Take your prenatal vitamins.
- ◇ Maintain a healthy, balanced

diet.

- ◇ Regularly visit your doctor.