

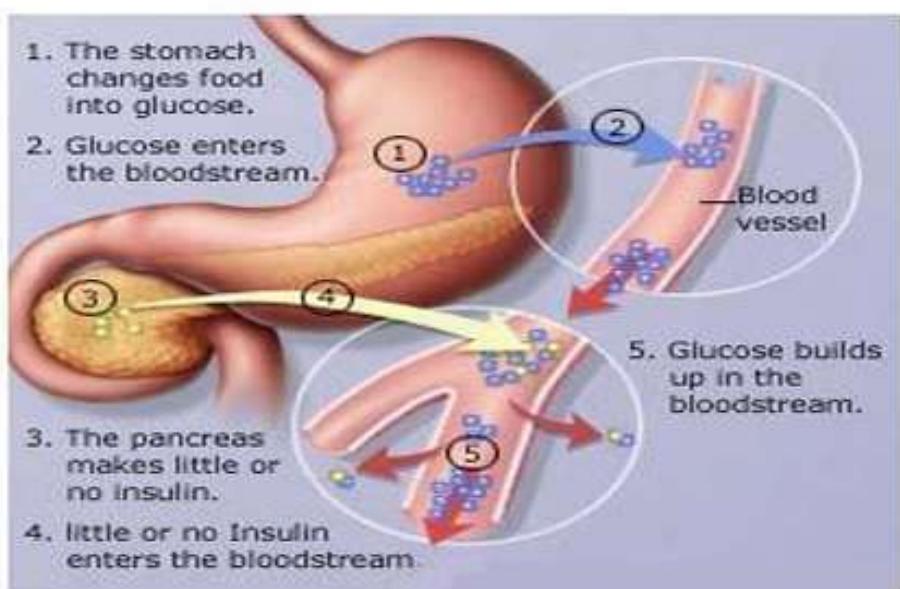
DIABETES :

Jyothi Vijayaraghavan; Judy S. Crabtree, PhD.

Diabetes mellitus, or simply diabetes, is a chronic disease affecting about 25.8 million people in the United States making it the seventh leading cause of death.

What is Diabetes?

Diabetes is a metabolic disorder in which there are high levels of sugar in the blood, a condition called hyperglycemia. Under normal conditions, food is broken down to glucose which then enters the bloodstream and acts as fuel for the body. The pancreas produces a hormone called insulin which helps to carry glucose from the bloodstream into muscle, fat and liver where it can be used as fuel. Diabetics are not able to move this sugar out of the bloodstream because of two primary reasons: 1) their pancreas does not produce enough insulin and/or 2) their cells do not respond normally to insulin, a condition called insulin resistance. This is why people with diabetes have high blood sugar levels.



diabetes. In T2D, fat, muscle and liver cells do not respond correctly to insulin. This is called insulin resistance. As a result, blood sugar cannot enter these cells to be stored for energy and builds up in the blood. Insulin resistance is a gradual process that develops slowly over time.

- 3) **Gestational diabetes:** This refers to diabetes that is first diagnosed during pregnancy. As many as eight out of 100 pregnant women in the U.S develop gestational diabetes. Weight gain and changing hormones that occur during pregnancy can impair insulin function, resulting in high blood sugar. This form of diabetes usually disappears after pregnancy, however, women who have had gestational diabetes have a 40-60% chance of developing T2D within 5 to 10 years.

Risk factors for Diabetes: The following factors contribute to the risk of developing diabetes -

Type 1 diabetes –

- 1) Family history of diabetes
- 2) Disease of the pancreas
- 3) Infection or illness that affects the pancreas

Type 2 diabetes –

- 1) Obesity
- 2) Family history of diabetes
- 3) History of gestational diabetes
- 4) Ethnic background - African Americans, Native Americans, Hispanic Americans and Asian Americans have a higher risk for developing diabetes.
- 5) Old age
- 6) Hypertension