



**Registered Dietitians**  
Department of  
Veterans Affairs  
*Leading the way to better health*

# Pre-Diabetes

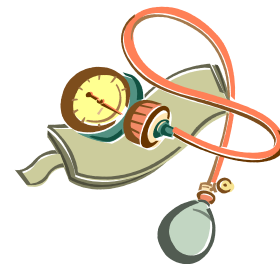
## What is Pre-diabetes? What should I know about it?

Pre-diabetes is a condition where the body is not using its own insulin as well as it used to. The glucose (sugar) stays in your blood and is not able to enter the body's cells where it is used for energy. This chart shows the blood test numbers when pre-diabetes is found.

<b>Diagnosis</b>	<b>Fasting Glucose Test</b>	<b>Non-Fasting Glucose Test</b>	<b>A1C blood test</b>
Diabetes	126 mg/dl or higher on two tests	200 mg/dl or higher with symptoms	6.5% or higher
<b>Pre-diabetes</b>	100 – 125 mg/dl	140 – 199 mg/dl	5.7 – 6.4%
Normal	Less than 100 mg/dl	Less than 140 mg/dl	Less than 5.7%

## Factors that increase the risk of having pre-diabetes and diabetes:

- Being inactive.
- Being overweight.
- Having a family history of diabetes.
- Being of an ethnic group that has a higher risk of diabetes, such as African American/Black, American Indian, Alaskan Native, Hispanic, Pacific Islander, and Asian people.
- Having high blood fats (triglycerides and cholesterol levels).
- Having high blood pressure, greater than 135/85.
- Agent Orange Exposure



## You can take an active role in preventing diabetes. Follow these simple steps to lower your risk from moving from pre-diabetes to diabetes:

### Increase your physical activity

- Being active makes it easier for the body's cells to use blood sugar for energy and can decrease blood sugar levels.
- It can lower blood fat levels and lower your blood pressure.
- It can help you reach and keep a healthy weight.
- Talk to your health care provider about an exercise program.



### Did You Know?

A weight loss of 5% to 10% and 30 minutes or more of daily moderate physical activity have been shown to help prevent or delay diabetes.

Losing weight has many health benefits. **Focus on ½ to 2 lb weight loss per week.** This is considered safe weight loss.

### Reduce your intake of calories. Reduce the amount of dietary fats and sugars you eat.

- Cut back on portion sizes, especially from carbohydrate foods.
- Share a meal and add a salad when you eat out.
- Choose more vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and beans.
- Limit portion sizes of starchy and sugary foods.
- Limit fruit juices, sodas, sports drinks, energy drinks. Use sugar subs in coffee and tea. Choose sugar free sodas, sugar free juice drinks, and water.
- Use cooking methods such as broiling, baking, boiling, grilling, microwaving, and steaming.
- **Do not deep-fry your food.** Use cooking spray or a small amount of healthy oil (olive oil or canola oil) when pan frying.
- Choose lean cuts of meat (turkey and chicken without the skin, fish, pork, and roast beef) and limit to 3 oz servings. Limit salty or processed meats.
- Use lower-fat versions of milk, cheese, sour cream, and cream cheese.

### Improve your habits

- Limit alcoholic drinks (12 oz lite beer, 5 oz wine, or 1.5 oz hard liquor) to 1 drink per day for women or 2 drinks per day for men). Discuss the use of alcoholic drinks with your doctor.
- Quit smoking. Ask about VA Smoking Cessation Programs.