



Glossary and Terminology

Blood Glucose or Blood Sugar: the amount of a sugar called glucose in the blood. Normal blood sugar around 70-180.

Carbohydrate: food group consisting of starchy and sugary foods, both naturally sweet foods such as fruit and foods to which sugar has been added. Carbohydrates are changed to glucose in the digestive tract. 15 grams of carbohydrates - equal to one carbohydrate serving.

Cholesterol: a waxy, fat-like substance used by the body to build cell walls. If too much is present, it can build up and block arteries.

Diabetes: a group of diseases that result from too much sugar in the blood

Diabetic Ketoacidosis (DKA): health emergency in which the body does not have enough insulin and cannot break down sugar. Without enough insulin, your body begins to break down fat as fuel. This process produces a buildup of acids in the bloodstream called ketones.

Endocrinologist: a doctor who specializes in diabetes and how hormones work in the body.

Fasting Blood Sugar: a blood sugar that is checked after you have not eaten for at least 8 hours.

Glucagon: a hormone that quickly raises blood glucose levels.

Glucose: a simple sugar needed by the body for energy. Carbohydrates are digested to glucose.

Glucose Meter: a machine that shows the amount of sugar in the blood using a small drop of blood

Hemoglobin A1c: a blood test that shows the average blood sugar level for the past 2-3 months

Hormone: a chemical produced in the body that acts as a signal for another part of the body to produce a particular response

Hyperglycemia: a condition in which there is too much glucose in the blood. Usually greater than 180.

Hyperosmolar Hyperglycemic Syndrome (HHS): a health emergency most often seen in older persons in which high blood sugar levels result from lack of insulin. HHS is usually brought on by something else, such as an illness or infection. If HHS continues, the loss of too much body fluid through frequent urinating, sweating, diarrhea or vomiting may lead to seizures or coma.

Hypoglycemia: blood sugar that is lower than normal range. Usually defined as a blood sugar less than 70 mg/dl.

Hypoglycemia unawareness: when a diabetic does not have symptoms of low blood sugar even though his blood sugar is less than 70mg/dl

Impaired Fasting Glucose: describes the condition in which a blood sugar obtained at least 8 hours after the last time you ate which is high (100-126 mg/dl), but lower than the blood sugar level used to diagnose diabetes

Impaired Glucose Tolerance: describes the condition in which a blood sugar obtained a 2 hours after drinking a sweet liquid during an oral glucose tolerance test which is high (140-199 mg/dl), but lower than the blood sugar level used to diagnose diabetes

Insulin: a hormone produced by the pancreas that helps your body's cells use glucose

Insulin resistance: insulin does not work effectively in the body to reduce blood sugar resulting in high blood sugar. One of the causes of high blood sugar in type 2 diabetes and gestational diabetes.

Ketones: produced when the body burns fat for energy or fuel. They are produced when there is not enough insulin to help your body use sugar for energy. Without enough insulin, glucose builds up in the blood.

Since the body is unable to use glucose for energy, it breaks down fat instead.

Lactic Acidosis: a condition in which acid builds up in the blood stream because the tissues are not getting enough oxygen

Lancet: a device that uses a tiny needle to prick the skin for a drop of blood.

Oral Glucose Tolerance Test: a series of blood sugar checks taken before and after drinking a glucose containing liquid. This test is most often used to diagnose gestational diabetes.

Pancreas: an organ located behind the stomach that produces insulin and other hormones and digestive enzymes

Pre-prandial Blood Sugar: a blood sugar measured before you eat

Post-prandial Blood Sugar: a blood sugar measured after you have eaten

Protein: food group consisting of meats, poultry, fish, eggs, nuts

Random Blood Sugar: a blood sugar that is checked regardless of when you last ate.

Triglycerides: building blocks of fats.