

Diabetes in Canada Fact Sheet

- Diabetes is a chronic condition that results from the body's inability to sufficiently produce and/or properly use insulin. Insulin is a hormone that helps the body use glucose for energy.
- More than two million Canadians currently have type 1 and type 2 diabetes.ⁱ As many as one third of these people are unaware they have this condition.ⁱⁱ
- It is estimated that over three million Canadians will be diagnosed with diabetes by 2010.ⁱ
- Type 2 diabetes accounts for about 90 per cent of all diagnosed cases and is one of the fastest growing diseases in Canada, with over 60,000 new cases yearly.ⁱⁱⁱ

About type 2 diabetes

- Occurs when the pancreas is unable to produce enough insulin or when the body cannot effectively use the insulin that is produced.
- Risk factors include:^{iv}
 - Age - older than 40 years of age
 - Weight – obesity
 - Family history of diabetes
 - High-risk populations - for example those of Aboriginal, African, Asian, Hispanic or South Asian descent
 - Impaired glucose tolerance or impaired fasting glucose
 - Heart disease, high blood pressure and/or high cholesterol
 - Gestational diabetes
 - Giving birth to a baby weighing over four kilograms
- Signs and symptoms of diabetes include:
 - Unusual thirst
 - Frequent urination
 - Weight change
 - Extreme fatigue or lack of energy
 - Blurred vision
 - Frequent or recurring infections
 - Cuts and bruises that are slow to heal
 - Tingling or numbness in hands or feet
 - Trouble getting and maintaining an erection
- Diabetes damages small and large blood vessels throughout the body.
- The incidence of type 2 diabetes is not only increasing in the general adult population but diagnosis of this form of diabetes has also increased in children and adolescents from high risk populations.^v
- Left untreated or poorly treated, type 2 diabetes can lead to complications such as stroke, heart disease, kidney disease, blindness, amputations, nerve damage and erectile dysfunction.^{iv}

Controlling diabetes – problem remains

- The onset of type 2 diabetes can be delayed by increasing physical activity, healthy eating and losing weight.^v

- Controlling levels of glucose and levels of insulin, which help the body use glucose for energy, are both keys to managing type 2 diabetes.^v
- Given the progressive nature of the disease, most people living with type 2 diabetes may require multiple medications with different mechanisms of action to achieve optimal glycemic control and to manage co-morbidities.

Impact of living with type 1 and type 2 diabetes

- It is estimated that 40 per cent of Canadians living with diabetes will develop debilitating complications.^{vi}
- For people living with type 2 diabetes, life expectancy may be shortened by five to 10 years.^{vii}
- Every year, diabetes is a contributing factor in the deaths of some 41,500 Canadians.^{vii}
- Approximately 80 per cent of people living with diabetes will die as a result of heart disease or stroke.^{vii}
- The financial burden for people living with diabetes is two to three times higher than it is for those without diabetes with direct costs for medications and supplies between \$1,000 and \$15,000 a year.^{viii}
- By 2010, the Canadian Diabetes Association estimates that diabetes will cost the Canadian healthcare system approximately \$15.6 billion a year and \$19.2 billion by 2020.^{vii}

Provincial statistics

- An estimated 650,000 people in Quebec have diabetes.^{ix}
- Ontario's Ministry of Health predicts 1.2 million people in the province will have diabetes by 2010, more than double the figure from 2000.^x
- 67,000 adults in Nova Scotia live with diabetes. Once in their 50s, males were more likely than females to have diabetes in Nova Scotia.^{xi}
- Over 5,800 new cases of diabetes are diagnosed each year in Nova Scotia.^{xi}
- Approximately 130,000 Albertans live with diabetes, and each month an additional 1,000 people in Alberta are diagnosed with the disease.^{xii}
- More than 67,000 Manitobans are affected by diabetes.^{xiii}
- In BC, there are almost 250,000 people living with diabetes, and an estimated 125,000 do not know they have it.^{xiv}

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