Take Charge of Your Health

Prevent Prediabetes

More than 2 in 5 U.S. adults have prediabetes, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This condition occurs when blood sugar is higher than normal but not yet high enough to be classified as diabetes. Prediabetes usually has no clear symptoms, so the majority of people who have it don't know. Left unaddressed, it significantly raises the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes, heart disease and stroke, but modest lifestyle changes can often stop that progression before it starts.

If you are uncertain about your risk, the following tips can help you assess your status:



Know your risk factors. Age 45 or older, a family history of diabetes, carrying extra weight and limited physical activity all raise your risk. Having more than one of these doesn't mean a diagnosis is inevitable, but it is important to have a conversation with your doctor sooner rather than later.



Ask about a simple screening test. A blood sugar or A1C test, done during a routine physical, is the only reliable way to know your status. Many plans cover this type of preventive screening, so check your benefits before assuming it's an added expense.



Move more during the day. Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate activity a week, roughly 30 minutes, five days a week. Keep in mind that movement doesn't have to happen all at once, so even short walks spread throughout the day can add up.



Aim for modest, sustainable weight loss. Research shows that losing just 5%-7% of body weight can meaningfully lower the risk of progressing to Type 2 diabetes.



Rethink what's on your plate. Small swaps can add up. Choosing water over sugary drinks, adding more vegetables and whole grains, and cutting back on refined carbs and processed snacks can help stabilize blood sugar over time.

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