

- Follow a healthy eating plan. Eat more grains, fruits, and vegetables. Cut down on fat and calories. A dietitian can help you design a meal plan.

Remind your health care team to check your blood glucose levels regularly. Women who have had gestational diabetes should continue to be tested for diabetes or prediabetes every 1 to 2 years.

Pregnancy is precious, take care of yourself and your baby... . Join Hands With Us

NOTES

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Gestational Diabetes -
Developed During
Pregnancy

PREGNANCY & DIABETES

◆ Shinde Clinic ◆

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Pregnant women who have never had diabetes before but who have high blood sugar (glucose) levels during pregnancy are said to have gestational diabetes.

What causes gestational diabetes ?

The placenta supports the baby as it grows. Hormones from the placenta help the baby develop. But these hormones also block the action of the mother's insulin in her body. This problem is called insulin resistance. Insulin resistance makes it hard for the mother's body to use insulin. She may need up to three times as much insulin.

Gestational diabetes starts when your body is not able to make and use all the insulin it needs for pregnancy. Without enough insulin, glucose cannot leave the blood and be changed to energy. Glucose builds up in the blood to high levels. This is called hyperglycemia.

What is my risk of gestational diabetes?

- I have a parent, brother, or sister with diabetes.
- I am 25 years old or older.
- I am overweight.
- I have had gestational diabetes before, or I have given birth to at least one baby weighing more than 9 pounds.
- I have been told that I have "prediabetes," a condition in which blood glucose levels are higher than normal, but not yet high enough for a diagnosis of diabetes.

How will gestational diabetes affect my baby?

Untreated or uncontrolled gestational diabetes can mean problems for your baby, as

- being born very large and with extra fat; this can make delivery difficult and more dangerous for your baby

- low blood glucose right after birth
- breathing problems

Working closely with your health care team

will help you give birth to a healthy baby.

Both you and your baby are at increased risk for type 2 diabetes for the rest of your lives.

How will gestational diabetes affect me?

Often, women with gestational diabetes have no symptoms. However, gestational diabetes may

- increase your risk of high blood pressure during pregnancy
- increase your risk of a large baby and the need for cesarean section at delivery

The good news is your gestational diabetes will probably go away after your baby is born. However, you will be more likely to get type 2 diabetes later in your life. You may also get gestational diabetes again if you get pregnant again.

Breastfeeding is recommended for most babies, including those whose mothers had gestational diabetes.

How is gestational diabetes treated?

Because gestational diabetes can hurt you and your baby, you need to start treatment quickly. Treatment for gestational diabetes aims to keep blood glucose levels equal to those of pregnant women who don't have gestational diabetes. Treatment for gestational diabetes always includes special meal plans and scheduled physical activity. It may also include daily blood glucose testing and insulin injections

1. A meal plan

- limit sweets
- eat three small meals and one to three snacks every day
- include fiber in your meals in the form of fruits, vegetables, and whole-grain crackers, cereals, and bread

2. Physical activity

- walking and swimming, can help you reach your blood glucose targets.

3. Insulin (if needed)

- Insulin is not harmful for your baby

You may be asked to check your blood glucose

- when you wake up
- just before meals
- 1 or 2 hours after breakfast
- 1 or 2 hours after lunch
- 1 or 2 hours after dinner

The following chart shows blood glucose targets for most women with gestational diabetes. Talk with your health care team about whether these targets are right for you.

Blood glucose targets for most women with gestational diabetes

On awakening	not above 95
1 hour after a meal	not above 140
2 hours after a meal	not above 120

Write down the results in a record book

After I have my baby, how can I find out whether my diabetes is gone?

You will probably have a blood glucose test 6 to 12 weeks after your baby is born to see whether you still have diabetes. For most women, gestational diabetes goes away after pregnancy. You are, however, at risk of having gestational diabetes during future pregnancies or getting type 2 diabetes later.

How can I prevent or delay getting type 2 diabetes later in life?

You can do a lot to prevent or delay type 2 diabetes.

- Reach and maintain a reasonable weight.
- Be physically active for 30 minutes most days. Walk, swim, exercise, or go dancing.