

GESTATIONAL DIABETES

WHAT IS GESTATIONAL DIABETES?

Gestational diabetes (GD) is high blood sugar (diabetes) that starts during pregnancy. Pregnant women are at increased risk of developing diabetes because pregnancy hormones may block insulin from working. When this happens your body is unable to use the sugar (glucose) that is in your blood so your blood sugar levels rise. A diagnosis of GD does not mean that you had diabetes before you became pregnant or will have it after delivering. However, it is important to follow the recommendations of your doctor to ensure you have a safe delivery and a healthy baby.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Blurred vision
- Fatigue
- Nausea
- Frequent urination
- Frequent infections
- Persistent thirst



WHAT HAPPENS IF IT IS UNTREATED?

Women who do not control their diabetes during pregnancy are at increased risk of having a large birth weight baby. Large babies may have to be delivered by cesarean section and are at increased risk of developing diabetes later on in life. In addition, babies who are getting high amounts of sugar in the womb may become hypoglycemic (low blood sugar) after birth when they are no longer getting those high amounts of sugar. Uncontrolled blood sugar during pregnancy also increases the risk of women developing type II diabetes later in life.

IMPORTANCE OF DIET AND EXERCISE

3 small frequent meals with 2-3 planned snacks in between can help keep blood sugars level and prevent spikes. In general a healthy diet should have controlled levels of complex carbohydrates (whole grain breads, brown rice) and limited amounts of simple carbohydrates (pastries, juice). It is important to combine moderate amounts of protein and fat along with the carbohydrates to balance out each meal. **Example** for breakfast: 1 slice of whole wheat bread with peanut butter, scrambled eggs, and fruit.

Regular exercise naturally lowers blood sugar levels by using the excess sugar (glucose) without needing insulin. Exercising should never be strenuous. Low impact activities such as walking or swimming are safe for most women during pregnancy.



[HTTP://WWW.EATRIGHT.ORG/PUBLIC/CONTENT.ASPX?ID=644246](http://www.eatright.org/public/content.aspx?id=644246)



SHINE.YAHOO.COM470_2240236.0