



Why do I need to know about it?
It affects both you and your baby! If not controlled, GD can (4):

- Cause your baby to grow very large or be born too early
- Cause you to develop preeclampsia (high blood pressure, often causing swelling in your legs and/or arms and can cause seizures or stroke)
- Increase the risk that you & your baby develop type 2 diabetes, which impacts health overall and can last the rest of your lifetime

Gestational Diabetes (GD)

What is diabetes?

According to the CDC, "diabetes is a chronic (long-lasting) disease that affects how your body turns food into energy... A hormone called insulin, acts like a key to let the blood sugar into your body's cells for use as energy.

If you have diabetes, your body either doesn't make enough insulin or can't use the insulin it makes as well as it should." When this happens, too much blood sugar stays in your bloodstream, which over time can cause serious problems with the heart, eyes, or kidneys. (1)

Okay, so what is gestational diabetes? A type of diabetes that women can develop while pregnant. You would not have to have diabetes before being pregnant to develop gestational diabetes. (2)

How do I know if I have GD?

Most pregnant women do not experience any noticeable symptoms, but there are a few factors that put some women at a higher risk (3):

- Being overweight
- A family history of diabetes
- Being Hispanic/Latina, African American, American Indian, Alaska Native, Asian American or Pacific Islander
- Being over the age of 25
- Having polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) or a health condition associated with insulin problems
- Considered "prediabetic"
- Living with high blood pressure, high cholesterol and/or heart diseases

What can I do?


1. Talk to your healthcare provider about testing your blood sugar when you are pregnant, even if they haven't brought it up yet!
2. Make sure you get your blood sugar tested after you give birth as well to see if diabetes could continue to be something you need to be concerned about.
3. Make an effort to eat healthy foods and exercise. Even a short walk every day can be helpful!

Questions? Contact Lauren Kozlowski, MotherToBaby Georgia Coordinator
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To learn more & see our resources, check out these helpful links:

- (1) CDC About Diabetes
- (2) Gestational Diabetes Basics
- (3) Am I At Risk for Gestational Diabetes?
- (4) Diabetes and Pregnancy: The Not-So-Sweet Story

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