

Symptoms of Early Diabetes

By Allen Smith, eHow User



Diabetes is called one of the the "silent diseases" because people can be afflicted with it for years before ever being diagnosed. Like other cardiovascular diseases, diabetes can cause irreparable damage long before they experience their first symptoms. For this reason, anyone over the age of 40, should get an annual check-up from their [family](#) physician to head off problems before they arise.

Types of Diabetes

Diabetes can be classified as two, distinctly different forms of the same disease: type I and type II diabetes. Type I diabetics (often called "juvenile-onset diabetes") suffer from a shortage of insulin created by the pancreas. Type II diabetics (called "adult onset diabetes") produce enough insulin, but it cannot be processed by the body. Both types of diabetes result in similar symptoms.

Early Symptoms of Diabetes

Whether you are suffering from type I or type II diabetes, many of the symptoms are the same. The most common symptoms include blurred vision, frequent urination, uncontrollable hunger, irritability, excessive thirst, unexplained fatigue and [sudden weight loss](#). Diabetics may experience one or all of these symptoms.

Peripheral Symptoms of Diabetes

Another commonly associated set of problems that diabetics experience is tingling or numbness in their extremities, especially their feet. Uncontrolled diabetes can cause "neuropathy" and damage or destroy nerve tissue that supplies feeling to the arms, hands, legs and feet. Typically, the disease is far advanced by the time that you experience your first symptoms. While neuropathy may never be entirely reversed, it does however, improve with better glucose management.

Skin, Infections and Cuts

Since all tissues of the body suffer to some degree by uncontrolled diabetes, it's common for type I and type II diabetics to suffer from dry, itchy skin, rashes, cuts and bruises. This is because the tissues of the body are not getting the nutrients they need. It's particularly important for diabetics to take care of their skin because compromised immune systems are common with diabetes and simple medical maladies may lead to more serious complications. Simple cuts and bruises that might heal in a matter of days in the non-diabetic can last for months in the diabetic.

Other Risks for Contracting Diabetes

Even if you've never experienced any of the symptoms listed above, you could be at risk for diabetes. If anyone in your family has been diagnosed with diabetes, you could be at risk for contracting it yourself. Asian, Hispanic, Native and African American men and women are also at greater risk for contracting the disease. Add obesity and a sedentary lifestyle and your risk increases even more.

Another less common type of diabetes is "Gestational Diabetes" that is associated with childbirth. Women who are obese, have a family history or diabetes or have previously given birth to a large baby and are over the age of 25 are at higher risk for Gestational Diabetes.

