

Frequently Asked Questions

Why are women with diabetes pre-disposed to developing recurrent yeast infections?

The glucose (sugar) in your body is the perfect trigger to encourage and grow yeast within your body.

What are the complications of using birth control pills while having diabetes?

Birth control pills may raise your blood sugar levels. Using the pill for longer than a year or 2 may also increase your risk of complications. For instance, if you develop high blood pressure while on the pill, you increase the chance that eye or kidney disease will worsen.

Will menopause affect my diabetes?

Yes. The changes in hormonal levels and balance, may lead to blood sugar levels that are out of control. Women with diabetes are also at risk of developing premature menopause and increased risks of heart disease.

Are there any diabetes medications that have a higher incidence of side effects amongst women who use them?

Yes, the oral medications classified as thiazolidinediones (TZDs) may cause women who are not ovulating but haven't gone through menopause to begin ovulating again, enabling them to conceive. Also, oral contraceptives may be less effective when taking TZDs.

Can women with diabetes breastfeed their babies?

Yes. Unless your doctor advises you otherwise, yes. Breast milk provides the best nutrition for babies and breastfeeding is recommended for all mothers with either preexisting diabetes or gestational diabetes.

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Bronx Health REACH works with the Bronx community to improve health and get access to better health care. If you have any questions about Bronx Health REACH, contact Yvette Holland at 212-633-0800 ext. 1232.
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Adapted from the American Diabetes Association website and the October 2007 Issue of "Diabetes Forecast."



WOMEN & DIABETES

You are the Heart of your family.



Take care of your Diabetes!

Diabetes can be especially hard on women. They have an increased risk for heart disease, osteoporosis and depression. They are also more likely to be obese and sedentary than men, which can increase the risk for diabetes and make diabetes difficult to control.

Fortunately, there are ways to prevent these complications and live well with diabetes. Turn the page for some of the special challenges of managing diabetes faced by women and tips to help deal with them.

Women and Diabetic Complications

6 Issues You Can't Ignore



1. Your Heart



THE ISSUE: Women with diabetes are more likely to have a heart attack than women without diabetes.

WHAT CAN I DO? Control your blood glucose, blood pressure and cholesterol. Ask your doctor what your diabetes ABC numbers should be and what you can do to reach them.

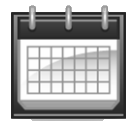
2. Your Bones



THE ISSUE: Women with type 1 diabetes have 4 to 5 times the risk for fractures compared to women without diabetes. Older women with type 2 diabetes are more prone to falls and fractures than non-diabetics.

WHAT CAN I DO? Get enough calcium and vitamin D by eating lots of milk products and dark greens. Building good bone health should be a lifelong habit. If you are over 50, talk to your doctor about taking a bone mineral density test.

3. Your Hormones



THE ISSUE: Some women have increased insulin requirements during premenstruation, but others may not. These same changes in insulin requirements may also occur during puberty, menopause and pregnancy.

WHAT CAN I DO? Pay attention to your blood glucose level and your diet during your menstrual cycles and ask your doctor if you should change your insulin dose.

4. Your Pregnancy



THE ISSUE: Babies of diabetic women are at increased risk for birth defects and other complications. Hormone changes because of your pregnancy can also change your insulin requirement.

WHAT CAN I DO? Manage your diabetes before and during pregnancy to reduce the risk of complication. If you are pregnant, ask your doctor about how to manage your diabetes and what you can do to prevent complications.

5. Your Mind



THE ISSUE: People with diabetes are twice as likely to experience depression than nondiabetics. 28% of women with diabetes have depression, as opposed to 18% of men.

WHAT CAN I DO? Talk to your doctor about symptoms of depression such as not sleeping well, loss of appetite and a loss of interest in normal activities.

6. Your Risk of Infection



THE ISSUE: Diabetes can slow down your body's ability to fight infection. Uncontrolled diabetes can cause glucose (sugar) to build up in your body. This can make bacteria grow and infections develop more quickly. Common sites of infection are your bladder, kidneys, vagina, gums, feet, and skin.

WHAT CAN I DO? Carefully inspect and clean any cuts or sores to prevent infection. If you experience itching, burning, soreness or irritation, talk to a doctor.