

# Pregnant or a New Parent?



## Gestational Diabetes

### What is gestational diabetes?

Gestational diabetes is a type of diabetes that occurs during pregnancy. If left undiagnosed or untreated, gestational diabetes can lead to high blood glucose (sugar) levels.

Insulin helps your body to control the level of glucose (sugar) in your blood but if your body cannot produce enough insulin to handle the effects of a growing baby and changing hormone levels, your blood glucose (sugar) levels will rise.

### You are most at risk of developing gestational diabetes if you:

- have a family member with Type 2 Diabetes
- are overweight before pregnancy
- are over 35 years of age
- have had a baby weighing more than 4 kg (9 lbs)
- have had gestational diabetes before
- are of Indigenous, Hispanic, Asian or African ancestry

### What does gestational diabetes mean for me and my baby?

- Your baby may be at an increased risk of developing type 2 diabetes in the future.
- You may be at an increased risk that your baby will weigh more than 4 kg (9 lbs) at delivery and you may have a difficult or complicated labour and delivery.

### What can I do if I am diagnosed with gestational diabetes?

- See your health care provider to manage your blood glucose (sugar) levels and keep them in the target range.
- Follow a healthy eating plan. Enjoy foods from all four food groups (vegetables & fruits, grain products, milk products and meat & alternatives) and eat smaller meals and snacks.
- Talk to your health-care provider about achieving normal pregnancy weight gain that's right for you. This will vary depending on your weight before getting pregnant.
- Be physically active. Regular physical activity can help control your blood glucose (sugar) levels.
- Keep all of your prenatal appointments.
- Sometimes healthy eating and physical activity are not enough to manage blood glucose (sugar) levels and your health-care provider and you will need to develop a plan to help you through this important time in your life.

**All women should be tested for gestational diabetes within 28 weeks of becoming pregnant.**



### Learn more about the prenatal benefit, nutrition, and health and your developing baby.

Connect with a Healthy Baby program in your community.

Telephone: **204-945-1301** (in Winnipeg)

Toll free: **1-888-848-0140** (outside Winnipeg)

If you live in a First Nations community and want to learn more about your local Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program, contact your health centre or nursing station and ask for the CPNP worker.