

## Look what you can do for your heart at [www.sistertosister.org](http://www.sistertosister.org)

- Learn the facts about heart disease
- Locate a nearby screening center
- Assess your personal level of risk
- Build a customized action plan
- Track your heart health progress
- Ask experts for advice
- Give and get community support
- Discover daily heart health tips...and more!



**Sister to Sister: The Women's Heart Health Foundation, a national 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, is dedicated to preventing heart disease in women by:**

- Offering women free cardiac screenings to promote early detection and treatment of heart disease and its risk factors.
- Increasing awareness that heart disease is the number one killer of women in the United States.
- Helping women make healthy lifestyle changes to reduce their risk of heart disease.

### **SISTER TO SISTER**

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## Preventing Diabetes



# YOU HAVE THE POWER TO HAVE A HEALTHY HEART



**SISTER TO SISTER**  
The Women's Heart Health Foundation

## The Diabetes/Heart Health Connection

People with diabetes are twice as likely as those without it to have a heart attack and stroke. Long-term damage to the heart and circulatory system can even occur during the “pre-diabetes” stage, when a person’s blood glucose levels are elevated but not high enough to be diabetes. That’s why it’s important to know if you have diabetes or if you’re at risk.

There are three types of diabetes: Type 1 is usually diagnosed in children and young adults and happens when the body stops producing insulin. Type 2 is most common and happens when the body doesn’t properly use insulin. Gestational diabetes occurs during pregnancy and is similar to type 2. Women who have had this are more likely to develop type 2 diabetes later in life.

*The good news: You can prevent or delay the onset of type 2 diabetes through diet, exercise, and by monitoring your blood glucose.*

A blood glucose test can diagnose diabetes or determine your level of risk. Here’s what you need to know about the three most common testing methods.

**Random Blood Glucose Test:** This is a basic test and does not require fasting. If your numbers are higher than 200 mg/dL, talk with your doctor about taking a more sensitive test. 200 mg/dL or less = ideal; above 200 mg/dL = high risk.

**Fasting Plasma Glucose Test (FPG):** This is a more sensitive test and is the kind most often used to diagnose or rule out diabetes. You will not be able to eat anything for at least eight hours before taking this test. Less than 100 mg/dL = normal; 100 to 125 mg/dL = borderline risk; 126 or more mg/dL = high risk.

**Oral Glucose Tolerance Test (OGTT):** This is the most sensitive test for diagnosing diabetes and requires fasting for at least 8 hours prior. Your blood glucose level will be checked immediately before and again two hours after drinking a liquid containing glucose dissolved in water. 139 mg/dL or less = normal; 140 to 199 mg/dL = pre-diabetes; 200 mg/dL or more = diabetes.

## Just Between Us...



- If you are 45 years or older – especially if you are also overweight
- If you are younger than 45, overweight, and have one or more of these risk factors: family history of diabetes; high-risk racial/ethnic background; high blood pressure; high cholesterol; physically inactive; history of heart disease; gave birth to at least one baby weighing over 9 pounds; history of gestational diabetes; or diagnosis of polycystic ovary syndrome.

## When to Get a Diabetes Test

# YES YOU CAN PREVENT TYPE 2 DIABETES



## 10 Heart Healthy Changes

1. **Build a support system.** It’s easier to make healthy changes when you can count on the support of the people in your life.
2. **Achieve and maintain a healthy weight.** Checking your Body Mass Index (BMI) is one way to find out if you are at a healthy weight. You can calculate yours online at [www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi/](http://www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi/)
3. **Lower your blood sugar levels by paying attention to what you eat and drink.** Limiting sugary drinks and starchy snacks is a great place to start.
4. **Watch your portion sizes.** Try eating on smaller plates and avoid going back for second helpings.
5. **Read food labels.** Choose foods low in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium), and added sugars.
6. **Try not to eat to deal with emotions such as stress, boredom, or frustration.**
7. **Exercise – it can help your body use insulin more efficiently.** If you are not used to exercising, start with 10-minute chunks of time a couple days a week. It all adds up!
8. **Look for ways to add activity to your everyday life.** Take the stairs rather than the escalator or elevator, play tag with your kids, etc.
9. **Find ways to de-stress—try deep breathing, taking a walk, or listening to your favorite music.**
10. **Take medications exactly as directed, including over-the-counter drugs.**

GET MORE TIPS AT [SISTERTOSISTER.ORG](http://SISTERTOSISTER.ORG)