

# How Is Obesity Related to Diabetes?

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Obesity does increase the likelihood of an individual to develop type 2 diabetes. A common understanding of medicine is that being overweight or obese is a precursor to type 2 diabetes. An obese body can create insulin, but the cells develop a resistance to it, known as prediabetes. Your body will keep producing elevated levels of insulin as compensation for lower glucose cell absorption. This results in elevation of blood glucose levels, which greatly increases the probability of type 2 diabetes.

## Insulin Resistance

Insulin resistance is when cells in your muscles, fat, and liver do not respond well to insulin and cannot easily take up glucose from your blood.

As a result, your pancreas makes more insulin to help glucose enter your cells.

As long as your pancreas can make enough insulin to overcome your cells' weak response to insulin, your blood glucose levels will stay in the healthy range.

## Obesity

A study conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in 2017-2018 found that 42.4% of American adults are obese. The study defines obesity as a Body Mass Index (BMI) greater than or equal to 30.

The incidence of diabetes and obesity relate based on BMI and age. As you age, the chances of becoming diabetic increase steadily. If you are obese, the risk of a diabetes diagnosis multiplies. The threat in obese women is more than double that of men in all age ranges.

## Know Your Numbers

The accurate measure of your diabetic risk is to know your numbers. Many overweight people do not believe they are obese and are in danger of becoming diabetic. Tracking your BMI is more important than the numbers on a bathroom scale.

To measure your BMI, we suggest the following link:

[https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/lose\\_wt/BMI/bmicalc.htm](https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/lose_wt/BMI/bmicalc.htm)

The other number you need to know is your A1C. A1C is a measurement of your average blood glucose levels over three months. The CDC has determined that a normal A1C is below 5.7%. With a result up to 6.4%, you are considered prediabetic and diabetic above that range.

The numbers do not lie, and you can only improve what you track.

## What Can I Do?

The good news is that obesity and type 2 diabetes are preventable with a proper diet and regular exercise. According to the American Diabetes Association, physical activity promotes an increase in insulin sensitivity, which can reverse your insulin resistance, and losing approximately 10-15 pounds will impact your health significantly.