

Title: Diabetes and Your Future Health

Author: Jay Vlaminck

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Abstract:

In patients with poorly controlled insulin dependent type 2 diabetes, addition of metformin to insulin regimen significantly lowers hemoglobin A_{1c} levels and results in lower units of insulin needed per day than in patients receiving insulin alone. There is also a trend towards decreased weight gain in those receiving insulin + metformin, though this was not found to be statistically significant in this study.

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Diabetes and your future health:

Perhaps the most important thing you can do for your health is to closely monitor your diabetes.

You may rarely notice when your blood sugar level is “high”. However, high blood sugar level damages many important organs in your body. People with high levels over a long period of time are much more likely to develop problems effecting:

Heart: Over a period of years, constantly high blood glucose levels damage the heart and blood vessels. Because of this, people with diabetes are at high risk of having a heart attack or heart failure. In fact, heart disease is the leading cause of death in people with diabetes.



<http://products.mercola.com/Images/cardio-essentials/heart.jpg>

Blood vessels: High blood sugar levels can damage your blood vessels, including the arteries that supply blood to your heart and brain. This damage increases the amount of fatty deposits that form in the arteries. When these fatty deposits build up over time they can block arteries. This can result in a heart attack or stroke.

Vision: Diabetes is the most common cause of blindness in adults in the United States. Over time, high blood sugar levels weaken and damage the tiny blood vessels of the eye. When the blood vessels are damaged, they can leak or become blocked, cutting off blood supply to the eye.

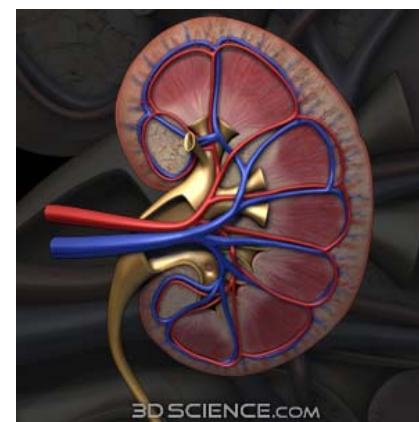


<http://www.buytaert.net/cache/images-miscellaneous-2006-eye-500x500.jpg>

Nerves: High blood sugar also damages nerves. The first nerves to be effected are those to fingers and toes. You may notice numbness, tingling, or a burning sensation in these parts. Eventually other nerves, such as those to your bowel and bladder may be damaged causing problems with bowel and bladder control. Nerves to the heart are

affected as well, causing some patients to not know if they are having a heart attack.

Kidney: The job of the kidneys is to filter blood. If blood sugar levels are high, it adds extra stress to your kidneys. Eventually your kidneys don't work as well and may eventually fail. This damage to your kidneys is irreversible.



<http://inventorspot.com/files/images/kidney.jpg>

Arms and Legs: Two of the problems already discussed, damage to arteries and nerves, combine to affect your arms and legs. As nerves are damaged, people with diabetes do not feel when they injure themselves. Once injured, skin and other tissue does not heal well because of previous damage to blood vessels. If the damage is severe, and the body cannot heal itself, amputation may be necessary.

How to avoid these problems:

Diabetes is a very common disease with serious complications. However, there are steps you can take that will decrease or eliminate your risk of these preventable problems:

Blood Sugar: Your hemoglobin A1C, a measure of blood sugar levels over 3 months, should be less than 7%. Diet, exercise, and medications all have an effect on your A1C.

Check and record your blood sugar levels. Although it is inconvenient and at times slightly painful, this is a good way to know if your diabetes is under control.

Medication - Take medication as prescribed by your doctor. This may include one or more pills or insulin.

Blood Pressure – Evidence shows it is best for those with diabetes to have a blood pressure of less than 130/80

Cholesterol – Make sure you see your doctor regularly and have your cholesterol monitored.

Foot Exams – Have your feet checked by your doctor yearly and do this yourself every day.

Eye Exams – See your eye doctor every year.

Don't smoke – Smoking is particularly harmful to people with diabetes.

Get enough **EXERCISE** and **EAT RIGHT**.

Remember: Type 2 diabetes is considered treatable and its complications are preventable!

For More information visit the following web sites:

American Diabetes Association:
www.diabetes.org

Web MD:
www.diabetes.webmd.com

US National Library of Medicine and National Institute of Health:
<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/diabetes.html>