

Gestational Diabetes (GDM)

What is it?

Gestational diabetes is a form of diabetes caused by the hormones of pregnancy. Like other types of diabetes it affects how your cells use sugar and leads to high levels of sugar circulating in the blood stream (and to your baby).

How Common is it?

2-10% of women will develop gestational diabetes in their pregnancy. Most women with GDM have no symptoms. Risk factors include having a high body mass index, history of gestational diabetes in prior pregnancy, PCOS, a family history of type 2 diabetes, history of delivering a large baby, being over 30 years old, or being African American, Hispanic or Pacific Islander.

What are the risks of having gestational diabetes?

Women with gestational diabetes have a higher risk for developing high blood pressure in pregnancy or preeclampsia, complications in labor such as shoulder dystocia and need for c-section, as well as a higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes later in life. Babies of mothers with GDM have a higher risk of excessive birth weight (over 9 pounds). The risk of developing preeclampsia or high blood pressure in pregnancy, preterm labor, excessive birth weight of the baby, delivery complications and c-section rate.

What is the treatment?

If you are diagnosed with gestational diabetes you will be provided with a glucometer (blood sugar monitor) and asked to check your blood sugar 4 times per day at home. The majority of women are able to control their blood sugars through simple diet changes and exercise. A small percentage of women will go on to need medication to control their blood sugar level.

Glucose testing options for Gestational Diabetes (26-28 week test)

2 Step Process

1 Hour Glucose test (screening)

Non –fasting
Drink 50 g glucola
1 hour later blood draw

Normal



Done

Abnormal



3 Hour Glucose test (diagnostic)

Fasting blood draw
Drink 100g glucola
1 hour
2 hour
3 hour
Blood draws

1 value abnormal = nutrition counseling

2 or more values abnormal = GDM

1 Step Process

2 Hour Glucose test (diagnostic)

Fasting blood draw
Drink 75 g glucola
1 hour
2 hour
Blood draws
1 value failed = GDM