

# *It's never too early... to Prevent Diabetes*

**If you had** gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM) when you were pregnant, you and your child have a lifelong risk for getting diabetes.

Because of this risk, you need to be tested for diabetes **after your baby is born**, then every one to two years. Reduce your risk by taking small steps for you and your family. If you weigh too much, you can delay or prevent type 2 diabetes if you lose a small amount of weight and become more active.

**Your children can lower their risk** for type 2 diabetes if they don't become overweight. Serve them healthy foods and help them to be more active.

## **What is Gestational (jes-TAY-shon-al) Diabetes Mellitus or GDM?**

GDM is diabetes that occurs when women are pregnant. It raises their risk for getting diabetes, mostly type 2, for the rest of their lives. African American, Hispanic/Latina, American Indian, and Alaska Native women have the highest risk.

**A Lifetime of Small Steps for  
A Healthy Family**

National Diabetes Education Program



# Action Steps



## FOR YOU:

1. Ask your doctor if you had gestational diabetes mellitus—GDM. If so, let your future health care providers know you had GDM.
2. Get tested for diabetes 6 to 12 weeks after your baby is born, then every 1 to 2 years.
3. Breast feed your baby. It may lower your child's risk for type 2 diabetes.
4. Talk to your doctor if you plan to become pregnant again in the future.
5. Try to reach your pre-pregnancy weight 6 to 12 months after your baby is born. Then, if you still weigh too much, work to lose at least 5 to 7 percent (10 to 14 pounds if you weigh 200 pounds) of your body weight slowly, over time, and keep it off.
6. Make healthy food choices such as fruits and vegetables, fish, lean meats, dry beans, whole grains, and low-fat or skim milk and cheese. Drink water or sugar-free sodas and fruit drinks. **Eat small portions.**
7. Be active at least 30 minutes, 5 days per week to help burn calories and lose weight.

## FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY:

1. Ask your child's doctor for an eating plan to help your child grow properly and stay at a healthy weight. Tell your child's doctor that you had GDM when you were pregnant. Tell your child when he or she gets older about the risk.
2. Help your children make healthy food choices and help them to be active at least 60 minutes a day.
3. Follow a healthy lifestyle together as a family. Help family members stay at a healthy weight by making healthy food choices and moving more.
4. Limit TV, video, and computer game time to an hour or 2 a day.

The National Diabetes Education Program (NDEP) offers materials that can help you and your family make healthy food choices to delay or prevent type 2 diabetes. You can order a booklet for adults at risk called *Your GAME PLAN to prevent type 2 Diabetes*, and a tip sheet for children at risk called *Lower Your Risk for type 2 Diabetes*.

To get your free copies go to [www.ndep.nih.gov](http://www.ndep.nih.gov) or call **1-800-438-5383**.

