



POLMED[®]

OUR INVESTMENT OUR HEALTH OUR FUTURE

All About PREDIABETES

Choosing to be
a better you



What is **PREDIABETES?**

Simply put, prediabetes is when your blood glucose levels are higher than normal, but not high enough yet to be diagnosed as type 2 diabetes.



Prediabetes includes two conditions:

IMPAIRED FASTING GLUCOSE

When your blood glucose levels are consistently high (between 6.1 and 6.9 mmol/L) even though you have not eaten.

IMPAIRED GLUCOSE TOLERANCE

When your blood glucose levels are high (between 7.8 and 11.0 mmol/L) two-hours after an oral glucose tolerance test.

These higher glucose levels significantly increase your risk of progression to type 2 diabetes.

The good news is that it's possible to prevent the progression to diabetes by reversing prediabetes.

HIGH-RISK FACTORS FOR DEVELOPING TYPE 2 DIABETES

- Age >45 years
- A history of gestational diabetes
- A BMI >35kg/m² (i.e. 22.6)
- Presence of both impaired fasting glucose and impaired glucose tolerance
- Metabolic syndrome (high blood pressure, high cholesterol, obesity)

LEARN THE LINGO



BLOOD GLUCOSE (aka blood sugar) is the main sugar that your body makes from the food you eat. Cells can't use glucose without the help of the hormone insulin that is made in your pancreas.



INSULIN RESISTANCE is when cells in your muscles, fat, and liver don't respond well to insulin and can't easily take up glucose from your blood. Your pancreas releases more insulin and as a result, both insulin and glucose begin to accumulate in the bloodstream.



TYPE 2 DIABETES is caused by insulin resistance, where your body doesn't fully respond to insulin. Because insulin can't work properly, blood glucose levels keep rising, releasing more insulin.



MMOL/L (millimoles per litre) is the measurement used to test blood glucose levels.



BMI stands for Body Mass Index and is a person's weight in kilograms divided by the square of height in meters. A high BMI can indicate high body fat.



CHRONIC DISEASE is a disease or condition that usually lasts for three months or longer and may get worse over time.



GESTATIONAL DIABETES develops during pregnancy when the body can't produce enough insulin that helps control blood glucose levels to meet the extra needs in pregnancy.

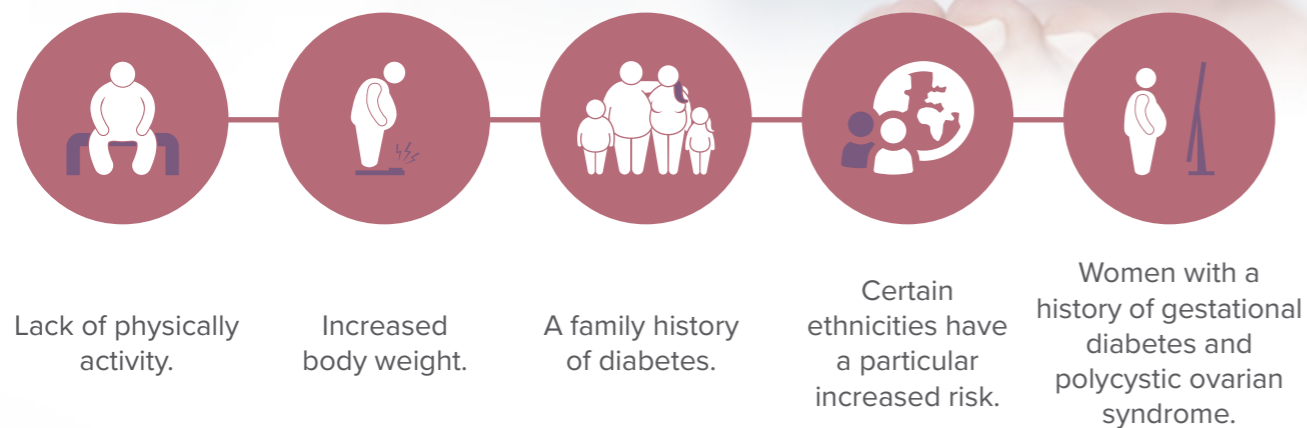
How do you know if you have **PREDIABETES?**

SYMPTOMS

As glucose rises, thirst and loss of weight may occur.

Other than that, it's unlikely that you will have any specific symptoms of prediabetes. It's common that in many instances prediabetes is detected when tests are done to investigate another complaint at a healthcare professional.

RISK FACTORS



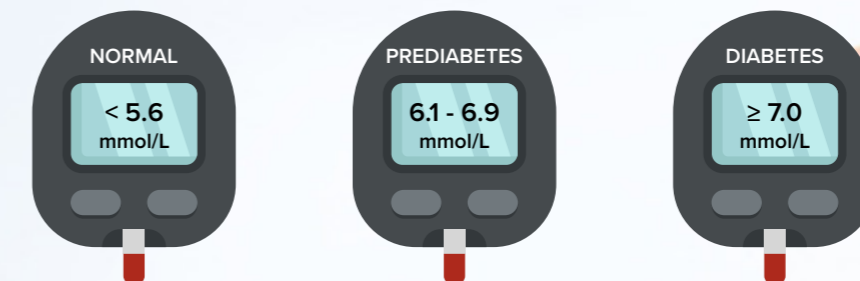
What tests diagnose **PREDIABETES?**

To definitively diagnose prediabetes, two tests should be done on separate days.

FASTING BLOOD GLUCOSE TEST

After an overnight fast (nothing to eat or drink) of eight hours, blood is taken from a vein in your arm, by a trained nurse in a laboratory, for a glucose level. The results will be made available to your doctor to discuss.

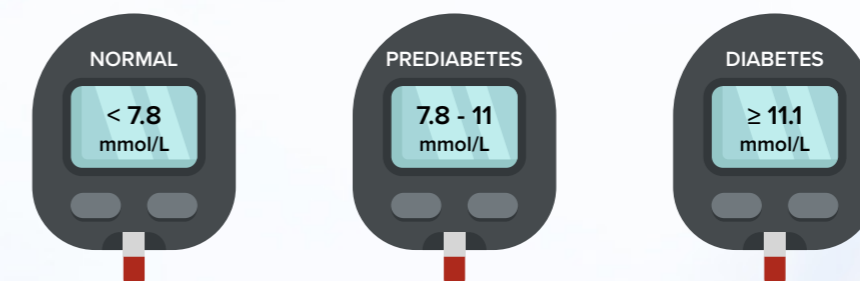
Definitions of prediabetes and diabetes after a fasting blood glucose test:



ORAL GLUCOSE TOLERANCE TEST

This test must be booked in advance with the laboratory. Again, after an overnight (eight hours) fast, a sample of blood will be drawn from a vein in your arm to measure your fasting blood glucose level. You will then be given a 75g glucose solution to drink and two hours later your blood glucose will be measured again.

Definitions of prediabetes and diabetes after an oral glucose tolerance test:



Note: a test of 5.6-6.0mmol/L is inconclusive and needs to be repeated.

You can visit your local GP and request these tests to be done. Speak to us if you'd like to find out how this test would be covered.

THE CHANGE STARTS WITH LIFESTYLE MODIFICATIONS

Weight loss

You don't have to do this alone, ask your doctor to refer you to a dietitian or health coach.

Weight loss requires a balance between calories consumed and calories used.

THE HOW:



CHOOSE HEALTHY FATS

Eat more fatty fish (salmon, sardines and pilchards), avocados (buy in season), olive oil, nuts and seeds, as well as sugar-free peanut butter. These are good for your arteries and promote heart health as well as improve insulin sensitivity.



CONSUME BALANCED MEALS AND MANAGE PORTIONS

Half of your plate should consist of vegetables or green salad. Then there should be about a palm size of lean protein (chicken breast, fish, lean red meat, ostrich). If you do add carbohydrates, it should be unrefined and the smallest portion of the plate.



INTERMITTENT FASTING is only recommended under the supervision of a dietitian. Speak to your healthcare team to find out if this is an option for you.



AVOID ADDED SUGAR AND SUGARY BEVERAGES

Added sugar, including honey, adds unnecessary calories which can lead to weight gain. These also spike blood glucose levels shortly after consuming it. Have food with natural sugars instead e.g. fruits (12 grapes or 1 medium naartjie) and vegetables. Use sugar substitutes only in moderation.



STAY HYDRATED

Drinking enough water (around 1,5 - 2,5L) during the day supports your metabolism, slows down ageing and can assist in managing appetite. Any drinks that contain sugar or caffeine can't be counted towards your water intake.



INCREASE FIBRE INTAKE

Eat foods high in fibre daily. These include vegetables and fruits (especially with the skin on), whole grains, and legumes (sugar-free baked beans, lentils, chickpeas).

SUPPORT IS NEEDED TO THRIVE

Research has consistently shown that having a good support structure makes the world of difference when it comes to diabetes prevention and management. Share your health goals with family, friends, or a support group - anyone who will provide encouragement and help you stay accountable.

All POLMED members are eligible for our Weight Management Programme. This 12-week exercise programme provided by BASA (Biokineticist Association of South Africa). It includes a Health Risk Assessment, group or individual exercise sessions, and dietician and psychologist consultations.

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN FIND OUT MORE:

Call: 0860 765 633

Email: polmedwmp@medscheme.co.za

PORTION CONTROL IS VITAL.

You can still gain weight or not lose weight if you overconsume healthy foods.

WHAT IS FIBRE?

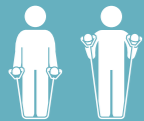
Fibre aids digestion and moderates postmeal blood glucose by gradually releasing glucose into the bloodstream. Eat more high-fibre vegetables: spinach, carrots and beetroot.

EXERCISE

- let's get moving

Physical activity needs to be of a moderate intensity, such as brisk walking, and it needs to be regular. A daily 30-minute session five days a week is ideal. The aim is usually to be active for 150 minutes per week which burns around 700 kilocalories.

Where possible, it's best to have a mixed exercise programme that includes resistance training, stretching, and cardiovascular exercises. Light-weight training improves insulin resistance and, thus, blood glucose levels.



RESISTANCE TRAINING uses muscle strength to move weights or body weight, or it entails moving against elastic bands, free or machine weights.



STRETCHING boosts flexibility and mobility by lengthening the muscles, either by extending them or with movement.



CARDIOVASCULAR EXERCISE is any vigorous activity that increases heart rate and respiration and raises oxygen and blood flow throughout while using large muscle groups of the body repetitively and rhythmically. Examples: walking, swimming, cycling.

Why not make a fun family 5km walk your weekend goal?

Find a free park or walk around your neighbourhood.

Remind yourself that every step you take, however small, you are moving closer to your goals.

ACCEPTANCE EQUALS EMPOWERMENT

To overcome and manage health challenges, you first need to acknowledge the reality of the situation. When you first become aware of your prediabetes diagnosis, it's completely normal to be confronted with a range of difficult emotions.

You may experience denial, or other emotions like fear and anger. The good news is that by accepting your diagnosis (that can be reversed), you can take control and make decisions that will benefit your health.

Remember, you're not alone. If you need extra support, consider accessing one of our Mental Health Programmes.

For more info, **contact us on: 0860 765 633**



THE POWER OF HABIT

Research suggests that it takes, on average, 10 weeks to form a new habit. This could be a brief meditation routine, walking a few extra steps or swapping out one unhealthy snack for a nutritious one. Over time, these small actions become automatic.

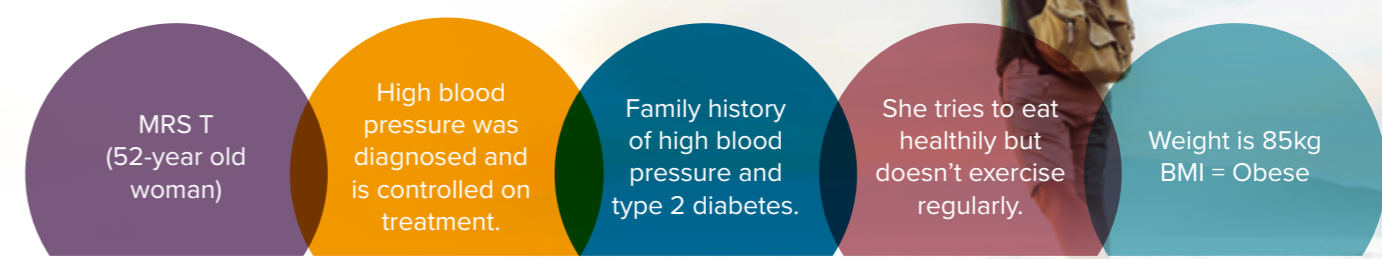
THE JOURNEY TO HEALTH NEED NOT BE TAKEN ALONE:
A ROBUST SUPPORT STRUCTURE IS AN IMPORTANT ASPECT OF RESILIENCE.

CHOOSING A BETTER YOU

Taking control of your physical health will also enhance your psychological well-being. A healthy body supports a healthy brain; and making the right changes can improve your self-esteem, confidence and overall happiness. These shifts can open up new possibilities and allow you to live your life in a more authentic and fulfilling way.

Health coaches are behaviour change specialists, helping you make the necessary changes with resources you may not have known you possessed. POLMED offers members support through the Weight Management Programme. Speak to us to find out more.

PATIENT JOURNEY



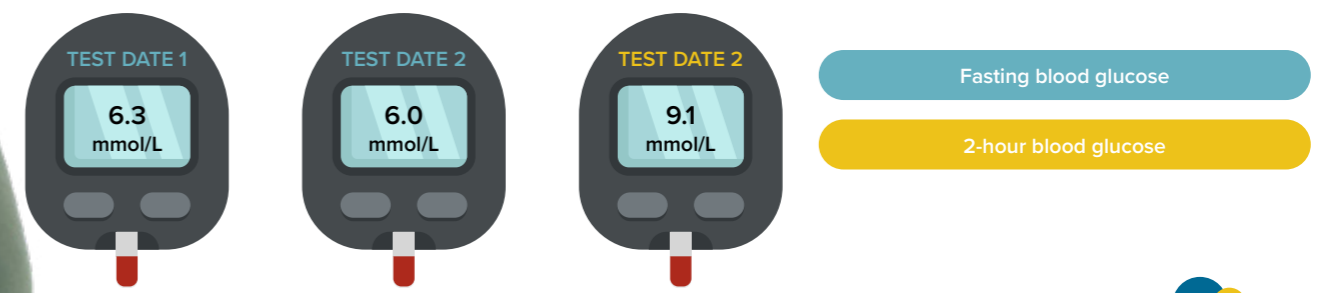
DIAGNOSIS

Five years ago Mrs T was required by an insurance medical to do a fasting blood test and her glucose reading was elevated so she was sent for another fasting glucose test and a 2-hour glucose tolerance test.



The blood glucose results confirmed that Mrs T has prediabetes.

STEP 1 	LIFESTYLE CHANGES She was advised on the need to improve her lifestyle, lose weight and the benefits of adding medication. Medication was considered an acceptable choice in view of both prediabetes being present and a family history of diabetes.
STEP 2 	GOOD IMPROVEMENT At first, Mrs T wanted to try only lifestyle changes and avoid medication. She saw a dietitian and joined her local gym. Six months later after hard work she had lost 8kg and her fasting blood glucose was in normal range.
STEP 3 	SET-BACK Mrs T presented again after 18 months for a check-up. Due to a job change she had stopped going to gym regularly although she still walked every Saturday. Her eating patterns were more erratic and unfortunately, she had regained the 8kg she had lost, plus an extra 2kg. She was asked to repeat the two blood glucose tests. Both test results confirmed she was once again in the prediabetes range.
STEP 4 	MEDICATION AND LIFESTYLE CHANGES This time Mrs T started medication as well as attempting to improve lifestyle again. She joined the POLMED Weight Management Programme, which provided her with the tools and support needed to lose weight in a healthy way. To manage her stress levels a little better, Mrs T enrolled in one of the POLMED Mental Health Programmes. Over the next 18 months she managed to get her blood glucose levels in the normal range. Mrs T exercises 1 to 2 times per week and follows a healthy diet most of the time. She is so proud of herself for reversing her prediabetes.



NEED MORE HELP?

FIND A DIETITIAN

adsa.org.za

FIND A HEALTH COACH

fmhcasa.com

FIND A BIOKINETICIST

biokineticssa.org.za

LEARN MORE ABOUT DIABETES

diabetessa.org.za

SUPPORT GROUPS

diabetessa.org.za

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The Cheese Has Moved

Mission

Word for Word Media informs and inspires all those who have, or are affected by prediabetes. WFWM is committed to working with all stakeholders to find solutions aimed at improving the quality, style, satisfaction, enjoyment and activities of people affected by prediabetes.

DISCLAIMER - PLEASE NOTE:

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