



Keep up with your grandson,

Diabetes is a metabolic disorder that requires daily monitoring as well as ongoing care and management with your healthcare team. It's a chronic condition that affects millions of Americans and can impact individuals of all ages.



An Avera Affiliate

and your diabetes care

Managing your diabetes effectively is an essential step toward safeguarding your health. Stabilizing your blood sugars allows you to reduce the risk of acute health crises and future complications while enjoying a better quality of life.

Diabetes is a complex and challenging disease that involves a lifelong commitment to address the many factors and variables associated with the condition. Floyd Valley Healthcare can help every step of the way. Our providers, working closely with patients, dietitians and other specialists, develop a personalized plan that addresses the unique needs of each individual living with diabetes.

"People with diabetes are unable to effectively regulate blood sugar due to problems with insulin, a hormone produced by the pancreas," says Kelly Wiese, RD, LD, CDCES. "There are two main types of diabetes - Type 1 and Type 2 - as well as a form known as gestational diabetes that occurs during pregnancy."

Type 1 diabetes is an autoimmune condition in which the body's immune system mistakenly attacks and destroys the insulin-producing beta cells in the pancreas. This condition typically develops in childhood or adolescence, although it can be diagnosed at any age, and requires lifelong insulin therapy for blood sugar control.

Type 2 diabetes is characterized by insulin resistance, where the body's cells do not respond effectively to insulin. Often associated with lifestyle factors such as food choices, lack of physical activity and obesity, Type 2 diabetes is more common in adults but can also affect children and adolescents. It may be managed with lifestyle changes, oral medications or insulin therapy.

Gestational diabetes occurs during pregnancy and causes high blood sugars that can affect your pregnancy and the baby's health. It usually resolves after childbirth but must be carefully watched during pregnancy. Those who have had gestational diabetes are at a higher risk of developing Type 2 diabetes later in life.

"One of the most important reasons to manage your diabetes is the prevention of immediate health risks," says Allison Larson, LMSW, LPN. "When blood sugars are outside of goal ranges, there can be dangerously high or low blood sugar levels. High blood sugar can result in symptoms like frequent urination, excessive thirst, unexplained weight loss, increased hunger, fatigue, blurry vision, slow or nonhealing wounds and tingling or numbness in the extremities. Low

blood sugar can cause dizziness, confusion and even unconsciousness.

It is important to know that managing a chronic disease like diabetes is not one size fits all. Your Floyd Valley Healthcare team will assist with your diabetes management, including medication, monitoring and lifestyle adjustments that help maintain stable blood sugar levels, reducing the risk of these acute and chronic complications. Floyd Valley Healthcare also offers the assistance of the Diabetes Services department to help you gain the knowledge and skills to make behavior changes and better manage diabetes and associated conditions.

Beyond immediate health concerns, diabetes can take a toll on various organs and systems in the body over time.

"Managing diabetes can reduce the risk of long-term complications like heart disease, stroke, kidney failure, vision problems, neuropathy and foot ulcers," says Wiese. "It is essential to reduce the risk of these life-altering complications to preserve your health and quality of life."

"It's important to note that some people with diabetes may not experience noticeable symptoms, especially in the early stages of the condition," says Larson. "Routine physicals can diagnose the condition in its earliest stages, which is another important reason to schedule those annual exams!"

Diabetes often goes hand-in-hand with other chronic conditions, such as hypertension and obesity. These conditions can aggravate the complications associated with diabetes and create a cascade of health problems. Managing diabetes effectively can break this cycle, leading to better overall health and a reduced risk of additional or future medical issues.

"Managing diabetes isn't just important; it's absolutely critical," says Wiese. "By keeping blood sugar levels in goal ranges, individuals can experience fewer symptoms and avoid complications, hospitalizations and even emergency room visits."

Floyd Valley Healthcare helps people with diabetes enjoy a more active and fulfilling life. Diabetes management is an investment in your present and future, promoting a longer, healthier and more fulfilling life despite living with this chronic condition.

To learn how Floyd Valley Healthcare can assist in managing your diabetes, schedule your exam today, and to learn more about diabetes care, visit floydvalley.org.