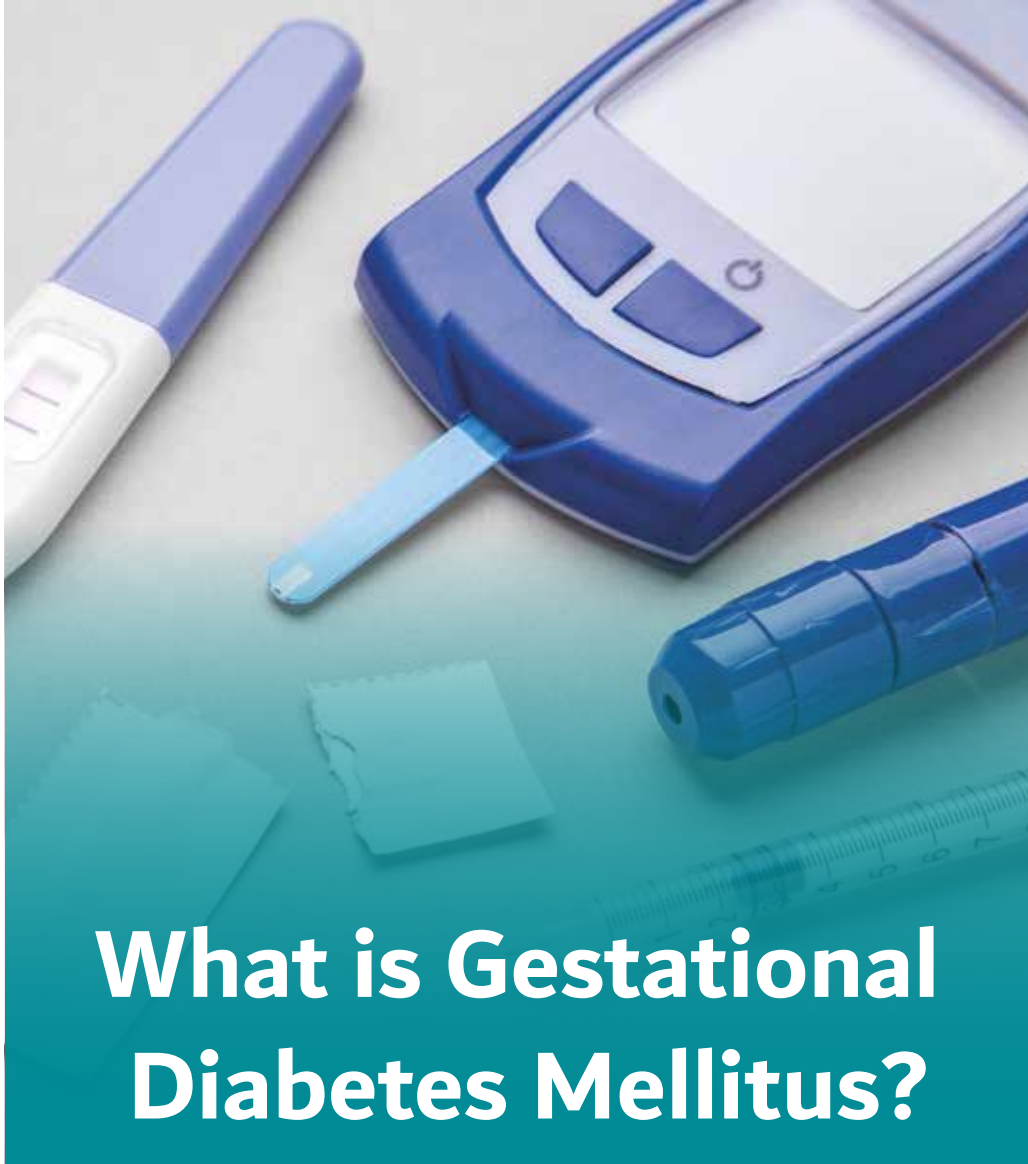


Gestational Diabetes

Mellitus





What is Gestational Diabetes Mellitus?

It is a condition characterized by high blood glucose (sugar) levels that are discovered during pregnancy.

Gestational diabetes may disappear after childbirth or it may develop into type 2 diabetes.

Causes of gestational diabetes



Some hormonal changes occur during pregnancy.



Increase in the levels of certain hormones made in the placenta interfere with the ability of insulin to manage glucose.



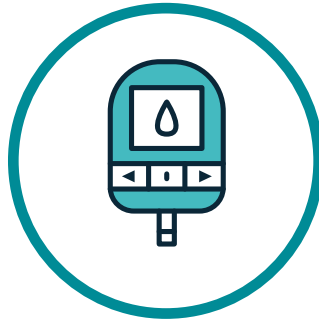
Mother's pancreas cannot produce more insulin to overcome insulin resistance.

Therefore sugar levels will rise.

Gestational diabetes risk factors



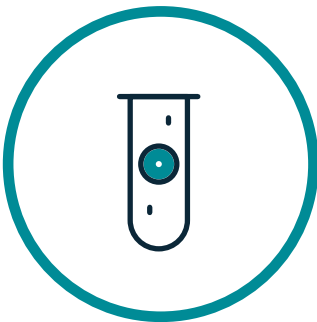
Being over 25 years old.



Having a parent or sibling with diabetes.



Being overweight before becoming pregnant.



Having polycystic ovary syndrome.



Previously giving birth to a stillborn baby.



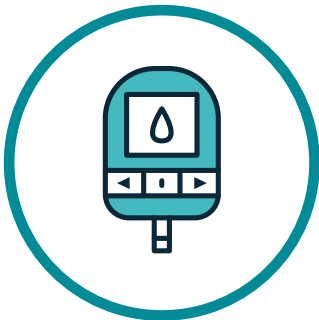
Previously giving birth to a baby over 4 kilograms.



History of gestational diabetes with a previous pregnancy.



The normal blood sugar during pregnancy



Fasting glucose less than 5.3 mmol/L (95 mg/dL)



1-hour after a meal, less than 7.8 mmol/L (140 mg/dL)



2-hour after a meal, less than 6.7 mmol/L (120 mg/dL)

A special screening blood test is done at 24-28 weeks of pregnancy called a Glucose Tolerance test. However, with high-risk factors, the test is done before.



Gestational Diabetes and Your Baby

Gestational diabetes can affect your developing baby in a couple of ways:

1. High birth weight:

Exposure to higher sugar levels from the maternal bloodstream can result in a giant baby. A larger baby can make delivery more complicated for both mother and baby.

2. Low blood sugar:

If your blood sugar has been elevated during the pregnancy, your baby may have low blood sugar, called hypoglycemia, shortly after birth.

Managing Gestational Diabetes by nutrition and exercise

Eat healthy food



Substitute sugary snacks like cookies, candy, and ice cream for natural sugars such as fruits, carrots and raisins.

Add vegetables, whole grains and watch your portion sizes.



Have three small meals along with two or three snacks at about the same time every day.



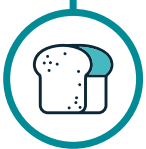
Eat reasonable portions of rich carbohydrate complex foods, according to your nutritional needs such as whole-grain bread, cereals, pasta; brown rice; oatmeal; and vegetables and fruits.



Include a good source of protein at every meal and snack such as egg, low-fat dairy products, skinless chicken, all kinds of fish, and seafood (except those with high mercury levels such as tuna, mackerel).



Include food with high fiber content in your meal, such as green leafy vegetables, fruits and legumes.



Use healthy cooking ways, such as baking, grilling and boiling.

Managing Gestational Diabetes by nutrition and exercise

Avoid\limit the following food



Sweets, sugars, soft drinks, sweetened juices and energy drinks.



Fatty foods, fried foods and fast-food.



Stimulants such as tea and coffee

Consult your attending physician so that you can develop your exercise plan keeping your medical history and health condition in mind.

Exercise throughout your pregnancy, aim for 30 minutes of moderate activity most days of the week such as running, walking, swimming and biking.

- Being active is an excellent way to help manage your blood sugar.
- Staying fit during pregnancy is also good for your posture and can enhance some common problems, like backaches and fatigue.



Managing Gestational Diabetes by nutrition and exercise

The initial treatment for gestational diabetes is to eat right and follow the instructions mentioned. To help you achieve the changes that you must make; it is preferable to consult a dietitian to obtain an individual nutritional plan for you according to your health condition. You should consult a certified diabetes educator in addition to your gynecologist during pregnancy.

General pregnancy tips



If you have morning sickness, eat small snacks, such as crackers, cereal, or pretzels before you get out of bed and avoid fatty, fried and greasy foods.



Check your blood sugar levels more often when you exercise.



Drink enough water.