



What happens if
you **do not** Take
Care of Your Feet?

Nov 14, 2023
World Diabetes Day



Overview

- ❖ **What is diabetes?**
- ❖ **Risk Factors**
- ❖ **Complication – Loss of Sensation**
- ❖ **Potential Problems**
- ❖ **When to Seek Medical Care**
- ❖ **Foot Care Tips**

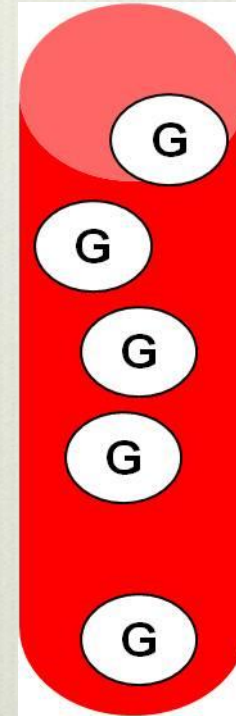


What is Diabetes?

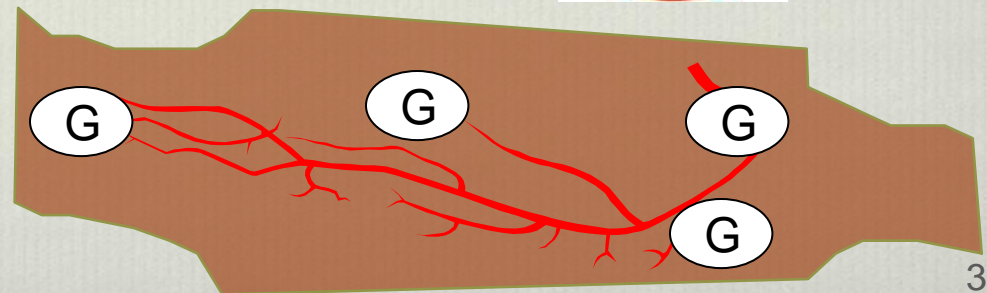
Diabetes means your blood glucose (blood sugar) is too high.

Glucose is carried by the blood stream to all cells in the body.

Bloodstream



Muscle





What is Diabetes?

Glucose comes from the food we eat.

Your blood always has some glucose in it because your body needs glucose for energy to keep you going.

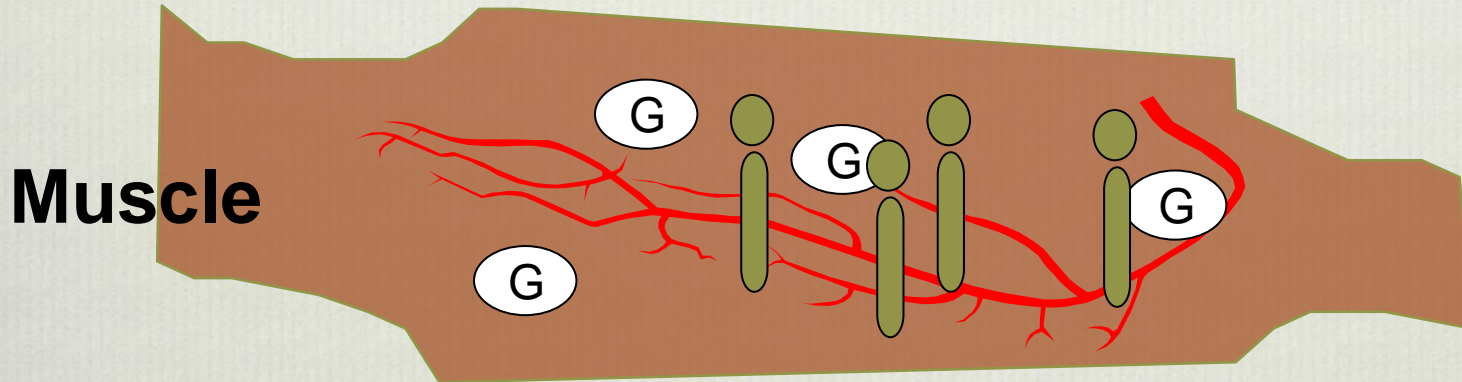
(Much like a truck needs gas to run).



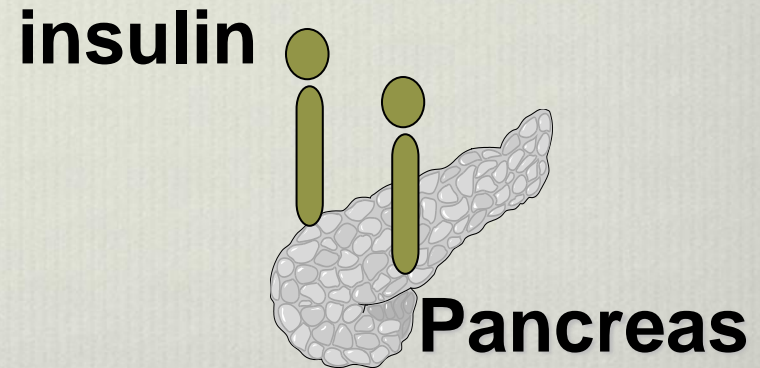


What is Diabetes?

- ❖ Insulin helps the glucose from food get into your cells.



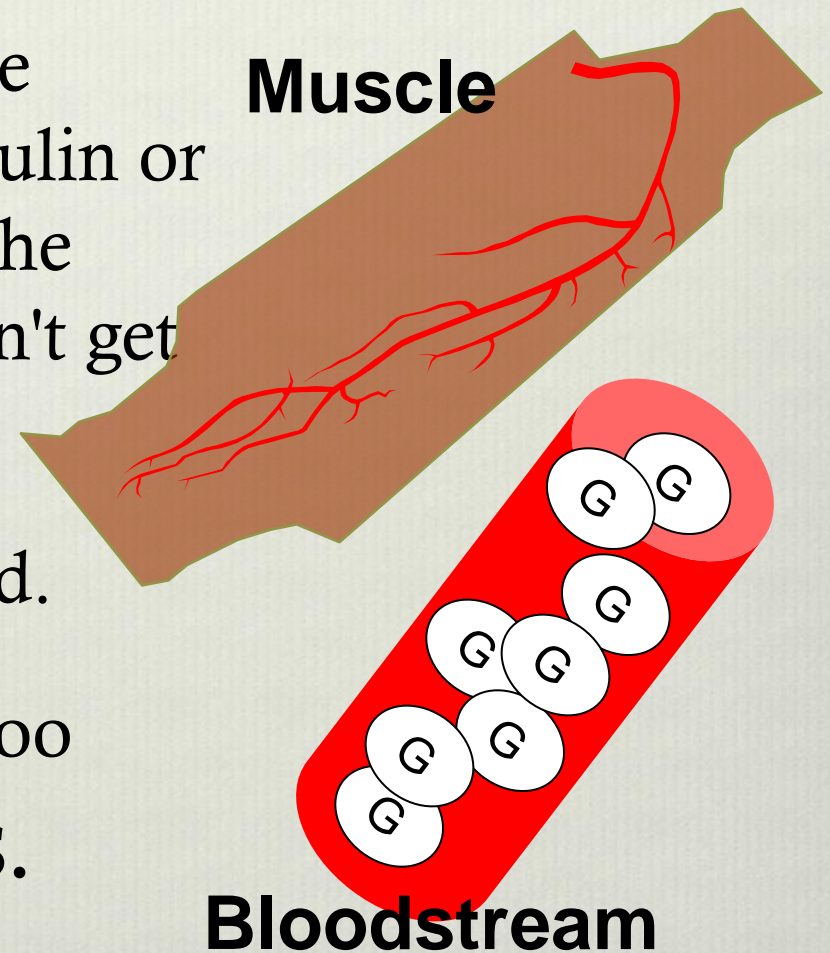
- ❖ Insulin is a chemical (a hormone) made in the pancreas.





What is Diabetes?

- ❖ If your body doesn't make insulin, make enough insulin or the insulin doesn't work the way it should, glucose can't get into cells.
- ❖ Glucose stays in the blood.
- ❖ Blood glucose levels get too high, causing **diabetes**.





Complications of Diabetes?

- ❖ If the blood glucose levels are not well controlled, high blood glucose levels over time can **damage** the nerves, kidneys, eyes, and blood vessels.
- ❖ Foot problems can develop and quickly and become serious.
- ❖ 75% of clients have not had their feet examined by a health professional



Foot Complications

- ❖ Damage to the nervous system = Loss of Sensation
- ❖ A person with loss of feeling to their lower limbs (legs/feet) may not feel skin damage or minor injury caused by a small stone in the shoe
- ❖ Breakdown of the skin on the foot and sores can develop quickly
- ❖ Damage to blood vessels = make it difficult to heal these wounds.



Risk Factors

- ❖ Foot ulcers
- ❖ Amputations

- ❖ Risk Factors include:
 - ❖ Age > 40
 - ❖ diabetes > 10 yrs
 - ❖ Smoking
 - ❖ high blood pressure
 - ❖ previous foot ulcer
 - ❖ decreased sensation (neuropathy)



Need to Know

How to:

- ✓ prevent foot problems
- ✓ recognize problems early
- When to seek treatment when problems do occur
- Although treatment for diabetic foot problems has improved, prevention, including good control of blood sugar, remains the best way to prevent problems.



Potential Problems

► Footwear

- Poorly fitting shoes are a common cause of foot problems.
- Wear shoes or slippers to protect your feet at all times
- Do not go barefoot



► Nerve damage (neuropathy)

- Because you lose sensation may not know that you have minor injuries (such as cuts, scrapes, blisters), signs of abnormal wear and tear (calluses and corns)



Poor Circulation

- ❖ Diabetes, especially when poorly controlled, can lead to hardening of the arteries or atherosclerosis. When there is poor blood flow to injured tissues, healing does not occur as well.



Smoking

- ❖ Smoking any form of tobacco causes damage to the small blood vessels in the feet and legs.
- ❖ The blood vessels become narrow resulting in poor blood flow



When to Seek Medical Care

- ❖ Trauma to your feet or legs, no matter how minor, needs medical attention. Even minor injuries can result in serious infections.
- ❖ Persistent mild-to-moderate pain in your feet or legs is a signal that something is wrong.
- ❖ Any new areas of warmth, redness, or swelling on your feet or legs are frequently early signs of infection or inflammation.



When to Seek Medical Care

- ❖ Pain, redness, or swelling around a toenail could mean you have an ingrown toenail—a leading cause of diabetic foot infections and amputations.
- ❖ Fever, defined as a temperature greater than 38° C, in association with any other symptoms or even fever alone should prompt an immediate call to your doctor



Foot Care Tips

- ▶ Consistent long-term **blood sugar control** to near normal levels can greatly lower the risk of damage to your nerves, kidneys, eyes, and blood vessels.

- ▶ **Examine your feet daily** and also after any trauma, no matter how minor, to your feet.
 - Use a small mirror if you cannot see underneath your feet

- ▶ Use a **water-based moisturizer** every day (but not between your toes) to prevent dry skin and cracking.

- ▶ **Wear acrylic or wool socks.** Avoid elastic socks and hosiery because they may cut off circulation.



Foot Care Tips

- ▶ **Cut toenails straight across**, not deep into corners, or file nails rather than cut them

- ▶ **Wear shoes and socks at all times.** Never walk barefoot.
 - Check inside your shoes before wearing them. Make sure the lining is smooth and there are no objects inside
 - Wear sturdy, comfortable shoes whenever feasible to protect your feet.

- ▶ If you are **buying shoes**, try them on at the end of the day and break them in slowly.



Foot Care Tips

► Smoking

- If you smoke any form of tobacco, quitting can be one of the best things you can do to prevent problems with your feet
- the blood vessels become narrow leading to poor blood flow to your legs and feet
- major risk factor for foot infections and amputations



Foot Care Tips

- ❖ Protect your feet from hot and cold.
- ❖ Wear shoes at the beach or on hot pavement
- ❖ Test water before putting your feet in to bathe just as you would before bathing a baby.



Foot Care Tips

- ▶ **Keep the blood flowing to your feet.**
- ▶ Exercise daily to increase circulation
 - exercise will improve bone and joint health
 - improve circulation to your legs
 - help to stabilize your blood sugar levels.
- Put your feet up when sitting
- Wiggle your toes and move your ankles up and down for 5 minutes, two (2) or three (3) times a day
- Don't cross your legs for long periods of time.



Foot Care Nurse

❖ Please see your Foot
Care Nurse visiting
your community
regularly