

Diabetes Basics - Complications of Diabetes

Both Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes are associated with long-term complications that threaten life and the quality of life. The disease is the leading cause of adult blindness, end-stage kidney disease(ESRD) and amputations (as a result of nerve disease).

People with diabetes are two to four times more likely to have coronary heart disease and stroke than people who don't have it. Diabetes complicates pregnancy and results in more birth defects than babies born to women without the disease.

- Heart disease is the leading cause of diabetes-related deaths. Adults with diabetes have heart disease death rates about two to four times higher than adults without diabetes.
- The risk of stroke is two to four times higher.
- An estimated 60 to 65 percent of people with diabetes have high blood pressure.
- Diabetes is the leading cause of new cases of blindness in adults 20 to 24 years old.
- More than half the limb amputations in the United States occur among people with diabetes.

It's important to know how serious the complications of diabetes can be. If you have diabetes, you will be the person most responsible for working to avoid the worst effects of the disease. You will want to know about these problems so that you can be alert to detecting them and preventing them. Diabetes care is a 24-hour-a-day effort, and preventing complications is worth establishing good self-care routines. The most effective way to avoid complications from either type of diabetes is to keep your blood sugar levels as close to normal as you can.