

[IMAGE]

## Approaching Diabetes? It Doesn't Have to Be That Way

By Editorial Staff

Prediabetes is the precursor of type 2 diabetes; it means you're not diabetic yet, but if you don't change your lifestyle soon, you will be. Prediabetics have higher-than-normal blood sugar (glucose) levels, and the seeds may already be planted for long-term damage to the cardiovascular system.

Now that you understand the problem, let's look at the scope of it – unfortunately, the numbers are staggering. Of particular concern: the number of young people (ages 10-24) who are already prediabetic. According to research published in *JAMA Pediatrics*, approximately one in five adolescents (ages 12-19) and one in four young adults (ages 19-34) have prediabetes. Impaired fasting glucose – in other words, higher-than-normal blood sugar levels, even when levels should be low due to not eating – is the most prevalent feature of prediabetes in these age groups.

OK, so here's what we know: Type 2 diabetes is no laughing matter; prediabetes can lead to diabetes; and too many people – particularly younger people – are on their way to developing diabetes. What can we do about it? Here are some simple lifestyle steps according to the Mayo Clinic: increase physical activity; increase fiber intake, particularly from whole grains; and lose weight if currently overweight or obese. Pursuing a health diet is also critical, says the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, including minimizing soda and sugary drink intake, choosing healthy fats (nuts, avocado, etc.) over unhealthy ones, such as red / processed meats.

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