

Word List

A1C – See *hemoglobin A1C*

Acesulfame-k – An artificial sweetener used in place of sugar that does not affect blood glucose

Acute – Sudden, severe onset that lasts for a short time

Adult onset – Old name for type 2 diabetes; See type 2 diabetes

Adverse effect – Harmful effect

Aerobic exercise – Exercise that increases your heart rate and breathing

Alpha glucosidase Inhibitors – Oral medicine that slows the body’s absorption of carbohydrates

Alternate site testing – Testing blood glucose with sites other than fingertips such as heel of hand or forearm

Analgesic – Medicine given to reduce pain, without loss of consciousness

Antibodies – A type of protein the immunity system makes when it detects harmful substances

Arteriosclerosis – Loss of elasticity of the arteries causing hardening of the arteries

Artery – Blood vessel that carries blood away from the heart to other parts of the body

Aspartame – An artificial sweetener used in place of sugar that does not affect blood glucose. Also known as Equal® and NutraSweet®

Atherosclerosis – Fat deposits along blood vessel walls, which can slow or block blood flow, also called arteriolosclerosis

Autonomic neuropathy – Disease that damages nerves serving the heart, blood vessels, stomach, intestines, bladder, and sex organs

Bacteremia – Bacteria infection in the blood

Beta cells – Insulin secreting cells located in the islets of Langerhans in the pancreas

Biguanides – Oral medicines that decrease the release of glucose by the liver and cause the cells to be more sensitive to insulin

Blood glucose – Glucose found in the blood; also called “blood sugar”

Blood sugar – Glucose found in the blood; also called “blood glucose”

Blood pressure – The force that blood has against the walls of the blood vessel

Body Mass Index (BMI) – A number calculated from a persons weight and height indicating body fatness

Callus – A small area of skin that becomes thick and hard from pressure and rubbing that could lead to serious infections

Calorie – Energy that comes from food

Carbohydrate – Another name for sugars and starches; the body uses carbohydrates for energy; 95 to 100% of carbohydrates are turned into blood glucose

Cardiologist – A doctor specializing in heart care

Cardiovascular – Related to the heart and blood vessels

Certified Diabetes Educator (C.D.E.) – An expert who teaches people how to manage diabetes

Cholesterol – Waxy-like substance made by all animals found in foods like meat, whole milk, and eggs

Chronic – Lifelong, chronic problem like diabetes can be managed but not cured

Complex carbohydrate – Simple sugars bonded together to form a chain digestion takes longer and glucose rises slowly

Dehydration – Loss of a large amount of body fluid

Diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA) – Severe condition where the lack of insulin causes very high blood glucose levels and urine ketone levels

Diabetic nephropathy – Potentially life-threatening illness damaging the kidneys which can lead to kidney failure, making dialysis or kidney transplant necessary

Diabetic neuropathy – Disease that damages nerves in many different areas of the body; *see autonomic neuropathy and peripheral neuropathy*

Diabetic retinopathy – Disease that damages the small blood vessels of the eye, this can lead to blindness

Dietitian – An expert in nutrition

Dipeptidyl peptidase inhibitors (DPP-4 inhibitors) – Oral medicine that decreases glucose production and also increases insulin secretion

Diphtheria – Life threatening bacterial infection of the upper airway, area above the vocal cords

Duration – The length of time insulin works in the blood stream to lower the blood glucose levels

Endocrinologist – A specialist in diseases in the endocrine system such as diabetes.

Estimated average glucose (eAG) – The eAG, estimated average glucose is based on the A1C results; the eAG is a new way to report A1C results; the eAG is reported in the same units (mg/dl) seen on glucose meters and lab reports

Exchanges – Meal plan where foods with similar nutrient content are grouped together

False hypoglycemia – Symptoms of hypoglycemia, (low blood glucose) when the glucose is normal, often seen when glucose drops quickly

Fasting plasma glucose test (FPG) – Blood sugar level measured after fasting for at least 8 hours

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Fat – Nutrient found in meats and oils; helps carry vitamins A, D, E, and K and is needed for energy and healthy skin; has twice as many calories per gram than protein and carbohydrates

Fiber – Indigestible part of plant foods; there are two types of fiber: soluble and insoluble

Focal neuropathy – Neuropathy focused on one nerve

Fructose – A type of sugar found in fruit, vegetables and honey

Gangrene – Death of body tissues due to lack of blood supply

Gastroparesis – Type of neuropathy that affects the stomach and intestinal tract; it affects the rate of food passing through the stomach and bowels

Gauge – Refers to the width or diameter of the inside of a needle; the larger the number, the smaller the diameter of the needle

Gestational diabetes – Type of diabetes that appears during pregnancy

Glaucoma – Eye disease caused by increased intraocular pressure that can lead to blindness

Glycated/glycosolated hemoglobin – *See hemoglobin A1C*

Glucagon – A hormone made in the pancreas that quickly raises blood glucose levels; a product injected to treat severe hypoglycemia

Glucose – Simple form of sugar produced when foods are broken down; insulin assists in carrying this sugar from the blood to the cell to be used for energy by the body

Glucose meter – Small handheld meter used to check blood glucose levels

Glucose tolerance test – Blood test to identify diabetes; see page A-3 for details

Glycated hemoglobin test (HbA1c) – Blood test that measures glucose attached to red blood cells; evaluates the average blood glucose control over 3 – 4 months

Glycogen – Glucose is stored in your body in the form called glycogen

HDL – *See high density lipoproteins*

Health Care Provider – A person who provides health services; a doctor, nurse practitioner, physician assistant etc.

Hemoglobin A1C (HbA1C) – Blood test that measures glucose attached to red blood cells; evaluates the average blood glucose control over 3 – 4 months

High density lipoproteins (HDL) – “Good” cholesterol or fat that helps remove “bad” cholesterol from the blood; recommended level is at least 40 mg/dl for men and 50 mg/dl for women

Hormone – A chemical released in one part of the body that travels through the blood to another where it helps control body function; insulin is a hormone

Hydrogenated fats – A fat that is solid or semi-solid at room temperature

Hyperglycemia – Another name for high blood glucose

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Hyperlipidemia – High levels of fatty substances in the blood

Hyperglycemic – Blood glucose levels raise higher and higher

Hyperosmolar nonketotic State (HHS) – A serious condition from extremely high levels of blood glucose causing severe dehydration leading to confusion, seizures, coma, and death

Hypertension – High blood pressure

Hypoglycemia – Low blood glucose (blood sugar) level

Hypoglycemia unawareness – A condition in which one no longer recognizes the symptoms of low blood glucose

Impaired fasting glucose (IFG) – A fasting blood glucose between 100 – 125 mg/dl; having pre-diabetes

Impaired glucose tolerance (IGT) – Blood glucose level between 140 and 190 mg/dl after a 2-hour glucose tolerance test; having pre-diabetes

Inactive lifestyle – A lifestyle with little activity, sitting most of the time

Incretins – Incretins are a group of gastrointestinal hormones that cause an increase in the amount of insulin released from the beta cells

Influenza – An infectious disease that spreads when an infected person coughs or sneezes and the droplets are inhaled, often called “flu”

Insulin – Hormone produced in the pancreas; this hormone moves glucose from the blood to the cells, which use them for energy

Insulin dependent diabetes – Old name for type 1 diabetes

Insulin production – Insulin produced by the body

Insulin pump – Small machine that delivers insulin into the body through plastic tubing with a small needle, size of a cell phone

Insulin reaction – Same as hypoglycemia, low blood sugar

Insulin resistance – Body does not react to insulin properly

Insulin sensitivity – Term used to describe how easily a cell can react with insulin

Juvenile onset – Old name for type 1 diabetes

Ketones – Acids that are produced when fats are broken down; occurs when there is not enough insulin to move glucose into the cells, the ketones are then used for energy

Ketosis – Condition in which ketones build up in the body possibly leading to diabetic ketoacidosis

LDL – See *low density lipoproteins*

Lifestyle changes – Changes made to eating habits and physical activity to control glucose

Lipid – Another name for a fat in the blood

Low density lipoproteins (LDL) – “Bad” cholesterol or fat that builds up in the arteries blocking blood flow; recommended level for people with diabetes is 100 mg/dl or less

Meglitinides – Oral medicine causing the pancreas to release insulin over a shorter period of time

Medical nutrition therapy (MNT) – Developing a specific food/meal plan to treat an illness or condition

Meningitis – Infection of the covering of the brain

Metabolism – Process that happens in living organisms to maintain life, usually from food

Microalbumin – Small amounts of the protein called albumin, which may be found in the urine by a special lab test

Monounsaturated fat – Unsaturated fat that lowers LDL without lowering HDL

Nephrologist – A physician specializing in the area of kidneys

Nephropathy – Also known as diabetic kidney disease, a condition in which the small blood vessels in the kidneys thicken and limit the ability of the kidneys to filter the blood

Neurologist – A specialist in the area of the nervous system (brain, spinal cord, and nerves)

Neuropathy – Disease that damages nerves in many different areas of the body; see *autonomic neuropathy and peripheral neuropathy*

Non-HDL cholesterol – A measurement of all fats that can cause heart disease

Non-Insulin dependent diabetes (NIDDM) – Old name for type 2 diabetes

Omega-3 – Fatty acids that are necessary for human health but the body can not make them

Onset – The time it takes for insulin to enter the blood stream and begin lowering blood glucose

Ophthalmologist – A doctor that treats eye diseases

Optometrist – A professional trained to test, detect and treat eye problems by prescribing corrective lenses

Oral glucose tolerance test (OGTT) – A test to diagnose diabetes; a fasting blood sample is obtained; the person drinks a beverage containing glucose; blood samples are obtained at hourly intervals

Orthostatic hypotension – Low blood pressure occurring with position change

Pancreas – Organ near the stomach producing hormones including insulin

Peak action – Refers to the time insulin is at its peak or maximum performance in lowering blood glucose

Periodontal disease – Infection in gums, gum disease often seen with diabetes

Peripheral neuropathy – Disease that damages the nerves in the legs making walking difficult

Pertusis - Whooping cough

Plaque - Fatty deposits that form inside arteries and block blood flow

Pneumonia - Infection causing inflammation in the lungs

Podiatrist - A specialist that works with foot problems

Polyunsaturated fat - Unsaturated fat that lowers LDL and HDL; found in safflower oil, corn oils, nuts, and mayonnaise

Preconception care - Care given before becoming pregnant

Pre-diabetes - Elevated blood sugar but not high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes

Pre-existing diabetes - Diabetes (type 1 or type 2) that exists prior to pregnancy

Protein - Found in high quantities in milk and meats; used by the body to repair and build muscles, skin, and cells; protein minimally increases blood glucose

Proteinuria - Presence of protein in the urine

Retina - Inner layer in the eye that receives images from the lens

Retinopathy - Eye disease in which the blood vessels of the retina weaken, form bulges, and may leak blood and fats into the eye

Rule of 15 - Rule to follow for treatment of low blood glucose levels; see Section J-5

Saccharin - An artificial sweetener used in place of sugar that does not affect blood glucose

Saturated fat - Type of fat that increases blood cholesterol levels; is solid at room temperature, comes from animals

Shingles - A viral disease with symptoms of a painful skin rash with blisters caused by the same virus that causes chicken pox

Sucrose - Table sugar

Sugar alcohols or polyols - Sweeteners that replace other sugar in food (sorbitol, mannitol, xylitol)

Sulfonylureas - Sulfa-based oral medicine that stimulates the pancreas to release more insulin

Syringe - Plastic cylinder that has a plunger and has units of measure used for giving medicine

Tetnus - An infection caused by contamination of wounds from bacteria that live in the soil

Thiazolidinediones (TZD) - Class of oral medicines that increase the sensitivity of the body's cells to insulin while decreasing the release of glucose from the liver

Total cholesterol - Blood test used as a screening tool; goal is 200 mg/dl or less

Trans fats - Fat produced when liquid oil is made into a solid fat

Triglycerides - Type of fat in the blood that sometimes increases when blood glucose levels are high; recommended level is less than 150 mg/dl

Type 1 diabetes - Form of diabetes usually developing before age 30; immune system destroys the beta cells in the pancreas, thus destroying the production of insulin; people with this type of diabetes need to take insulin

Type 2 diabetes - Form of diabetes usually developing after age 40 but has been known to develop in younger people; with this type of diabetes, the person may develop insulin resistance and/or problems with insulin secretion; treatment includes diet, exercise, and possibly insulin or oral medicines

Unsaturated fat - Type of fat that lowers blood cholesterol levels; is liquid at room temperature; polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats are types of this kind of fat

Urologist - Physician specializing in care of the bladder and urinary system

Vascular - Related to blood vessels in the body

Vein - A blood vessel that carries blood back to the heart

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