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 person’s 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
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
**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
Tetanus – 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

*The American Diabetes Association Recognizes this education service as meeting the National Standards for Diabetes Self-Management Education and Support.