

Signs, Symptoms and Risks of Type 2 Diabetes in Seniors

There are a number of risks associated with having diabetes that can have long-term effects on the entire body.

High blood sugar is harmful to the kidneys, nerves, eyes and blood pressure. It also puts a strain on the heart, which is being forced to work overtime, increasing the risk for heart disease and stroke. High blood pressure from type 2 diabetes can cause memory loss and a decline in cognitive function.

For seniors with type 2 diabetes, decreased blood flow can cause a decreased mobility and weakness in arms and legs, increasing a senior's risk for falls. Reduced blood flow can also make it harder for wounds to heal or cause them to not heal at all.

Here are a few common signs that a person may be approaching prediabetic or type 2 diabetic levels:

- 1. Increase in thirst and urination:**
The increase in glucose levels caused by prediabetes or diabetes sends the kidneys into overdrive. This can cause a person to drink more water and urinate more frequently.
- 2. Fatigue:**
When blood sugar levels are high, it's harder for the body to convert glucose into energy. This can cause seniors to experience lethargic behavior or extreme fatigue.
- 3. Slow healing sores:**
Due to the decreased circulation diabetes causes in the body, people notice that bruises or cuts tend to heal much slower than they used to.
- 4. Dizziness and/or fainting:**
Diabetes causes inconsistent levels of blood glucose. When those levels plummet, it can cause weakness, dizziness, shakiness, confusion and even fainting.
- 5. Headaches:**
Our brain requires consistent delivery of glucose to function properly. When it isn't receiving that energy due to diabetes or prediabetes, it can cause reoccurring headaches.
- 6. Numbness in hands and feet:**
Roughly half of people with diabetes have nerve damage, especially those who have been diabetic for many years. This is due to the long-term decreased circulation in extremities.
- 7. Gum problems:**
Red, swollen and painful gums are common because diabetes can compromise your body's immune system, increasing the likelihood of infection in your gums.
- 8. Increased appetite:**
Even when eating large meals, the body can still feel hunger due to glucose not entering our cells.
- 9. Dry mouth:**
Dry mouth, cracked lips and a rough-feeling tongue, are common signs of diabetes and prediabetes because the body isn't able to create a sufficient amount of saliva.
- 10. Blurry vision:**
High blood glucose levels can draw fluid out of the eyes, making it difficult for them to focus and causing blurriness in vision.

For more information on diabetes and how CorsoCare can support you, call us at 248-438-8535.