Gestational Diabetes

Gestational Diabetes is a type of diabetes you can get when you are pregnant.

Diabetes is a disease where the body does not make or use insulin properly.

1.2% of women in Indiana were told they had diabetes while pregnant.

≈ 50% About half of women with gestational diabetes will be diagnosed with type 2 diabetes in the future.

What is Gestational Diabetes?

- Gestational diabetes is a type of diabetes that is first seen in pregnant women who have never had diabetes before.
- Gestational diabetes is usually shows up in mid-pregnancy.
- Your doctor will check for gestational diabetes between 24-28 weeks of pregnancy.
- Some women have more than one pregnancy affected by gestational diabetes.
- When you’re pregnant, your body needs to make more insulin.
- Gestational diabetes usually goes away after your baby is born. However, it can put you at risk to develop type 2 diabetes in the future.
- Having diabetes when you are pregnant can result in pregnancy complications.
- Gestational diabetes can often be controlled through healthy eating and regular exercise.
- Sometimes women with gestational diabetes must take insulin.
- If you had gestational diabetes, ask your doctor to check for diabetes 6-12 weeks after your baby is born.
- If you had gestational diabetes, you should be checked every 1-3 years.
Breastfeeding and diabetes

- Breastfeeding your baby has many health benefits.
- If you had gestational diabetes, breastfeeding may help reduce your risk of developing type 2 diabetes.¹
- Breastfeeding can reduce your baby’s risk of cardiovascular disease, diabetes and other health problems.²

Fig. 1

In 2015, 1.2% of women were told by a doctor that they had diabetes while pregnant.

Take action

- See your doctor once a year for check-ups—more often if you have a chronic disease like hypertension.
- Maintain a healthy blood pressure and cholesterol level. If you have been told that you have high blood pressure or cholesterol, ask your doctor about the DASH diet.
- At mealtime, make half your plate fruits and veggies.
- Take a walk after lunch and dinner. Just 15 minutes can make a difference.
- Don’t smoke or chew tobacco. If you do, talk to your doctor about the benefits of quitting.
- Get at least eight (8) hours of sleep a night.
- If your health changes or you’re not feeling well, talk to your doctor.
- Talk to your doctor or a dietitian about lifestyle changes that could help improve your health.
- Go to www.choosemyplate.gov to find recipe ideas, online tools and resources to help you eat healthier and move more

Chronic disease resources

- Baby and Me Tobacco Free is a program to help you quit smoking during and after your pregnancy.
- Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) is a lifestyle change program that helps to delay and/or prevent type 2 diabetes for individuals at risk.
- Indiana’s Community Health Centers provide local primary health care services from a community perspective.
- Indiana Perinatal Network is a group of providers that seeks to improve the health of all mothers and babies.
- For problems with depression, addiction, or other mental health services: Community Mental Health Services Locator
- WISEWOMAN: (Well-Integrated Screening and Evaluation for Women Across the Nation Program) provides cardiovascular screening for women ages 40-64 who are participants in the Indiana Breast and Cervical Cancer Program (IN-BCCP).
- Indiana Tobacco Quitline is a free phone service to help Indiana smokers quit. For support call: 800-Quit-Now (800-784-8669).
- Indiana Women, Infants and Children (WIC) is a program helping mothers and babies improve access to nutritious food and promoting healthier lifestyle.

Breastfeeding and diabetes

- Breastfeeding your baby has many health benefits.
- If you had gestational diabetes, breastfeeding may help reduce your risk of developing type 2 diabetes.³
- Breastfeeding can reduce your baby’s risk of cardiovascular disease, diabetes and other health problems.⁴

Fig. 2

Latina women are more likely to get gestational diabetes when compared to White or Black women.

References: