Diabetes is a chronic condition that occurs when the body does not produce enough insulin or when it cannot use it effectively. Insulin is a hormone that helps regulate blood sugar levels (glycemia). If left untreated, blood sugar can rise to health-threatening levels. Treatments vary based on the individual and on the type of diabetes. Despite advances in treatment and care, diabetes remains a complex condition to manage.

Optimal control of blood sugar is essential to reduce the risk of short and long-term health complications.*

**WHAT IS DIABETES?**

Diabetes in Canada

**MODIFIABLE RISK FACTORS (TYPE 2)**

- Obesity and overweight
- Pre-diabetes
- Physical inactivity
- Unhealthy eating
- High blood pressure or high cholesterol

**DIABETES TYPES**

- Type 1
- Type 2
- Gestational
- Other types

**TREATMENTS**

- Oral medication
- Insulin therapy
- Lifestyle management
- Combination of treatments

**POTENTIAL COMPLICATIONS**

- Hypoglycemia and hyperglycemia
- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Kidney disease
- Nerve damage
- Eye damage
- Lower-limb damage and amputations

**ACCORDING TO NATIONAL DATA:**

3.4 MILLION **CANADIANS**
were living with diabetes in 2017–2018,
compared to 1.3 MILLION in 2000–2001*.

3.3% average annual increase in prevalence**

2000–2001

4.7% of the population (1.3 million)

2017–2018

8.1% of the population (3.4 million)

* Type 1 and type 2 diabetes combined, excluding gestational diabetes. Aged 1+ years.
** Prevalence estimates are age-standardized to the 2011 Canadian population using five-year age groups and are based on non-rounded counts.

Public Health Agency of Canada
Agence de la santé publique du Canada
CHRONIC DISEASE SURVEILLANCE is important to monitor changes in diabetes patterns over time to inform programs and policies to improve the lives of Canadians with diabetes. Canada has one of the most comprehensive chronic disease surveillance systems in the world.⁵

**WHO IS AT RISK?**

Type 2 diabetes and its risk factors are more prevalent among Canadians experiencing marginalization, including First Nations and Métis, people of African and South Asian ethnicity, and people with lower income and education levels.⁴

**CANADIAN CHRONIC DISEASE SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM (CCDSS)**

The Canadian Chronic Disease Surveillance System (CCDSS) is a collaborative network of provincial and territorial chronic disease surveillance systems, supported by the Public Health Agency of Canada since 1999⁶–⁷ that:

1. Includes data on all Canadians with a valid health card number;
2. Provides statistics on more than 20 chronic diseases and conditions, including diabetes;
3. Represents the only population-based source for diabetes incidence data (number of new cases) in Canada;
4. Captures diagnosed diseases/conditions/health events using administrative databases such as health insurance registries, physician billing claims and hospital discharge databases; and
5. Uses validated methods to identify cases of diagnosed chronic diseases and conditions.

The CCDSS continues to expand and evolve: enhancing the surveillance of chronic diseases, including diabetes; and providing reliable data and information to researchers, policymakers, health care professionals and the public.

**LEARN MORE ABOUT DIABETES:**

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT DIABETES, VISIT: Diabetes in Canada

EXPLORE THE LATEST DATA Canadian Chronic Disease Surveillance System—Public Health Infobase

ARE YOU AT RISK? CANRISK

**Sources:**