

Pre diabetes – What is it?

Diabetes develops when a person cannot control the levels of sugar in their blood. Pre diabetes is when there are signs of this starting to happen. There is a common misunderstanding that diabetes is just about sugar intake. In fact it is all about carbohydrates also, which are broken down into glucose (sugar) e.g. bread, rice, pasta, biscuits, cakes etc.

Your blood test has shown that you are at risk of developing diabetes. You do not have diabetes yet and you can do a lot to reduce your risk of developing this in the future.

What is HbA1c?

Diagnosis of pre diabetes is by a simple blood test called HbA1c which measures the amount of sugar bound to your red blood cells.

By measuring glycated haemoglobin (HbA1c), clinicians are able to get an overall picture of what our average blood sugar levels have been over a period of weeks/months.

If your blood sugar levels have been high in recent weeks, your HbA1c will also be greater.

HbA1c in diagnosis

HbA1c can indicate people with prediabetes or diabetes as follows:

Result (mmol/mol)	Meaning
20 - 42	Normal
43 - 47	Pre-diabetes
48+	Diabetes

If your result is 48 or over, your test will be repeated to confirm the diagnosis of diabetes.

A result between 43 and 47 is known as prediabetes. This is important to know because although you are not diabetic, you are at very high risk of developing it. Your practice Health Care assistant or Practice Nurse can advise you about diet and lifestyle measures if you need more help. Changing lifestyle and diet will help you to reverse the situation.

Useful Resources

Diabetes UK <https://www.diabetes.org.uk/>

NHS Choices <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Diabetes-type2/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

[The 8 week Low Sugar Diet- Michael Mosely- on line and book available](#)