

# HEALTH TALK ON DIABETES MELLITUS

## INTRODUCTION

**DIABETES MELLITUS** is a chronic disease caused by the inability of the pancreas to produce insulin or to use the insulin produced in an improper way. Diabetes is the 7<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death among Africans and African-Americans.

## CAUSE (A)

After a meal, a portion of the food you eat is broken down into sugar (Glucose). The sugar then passes into the blood stream and to the body's cells via a hormone called insulin that is produced by the pancreas. Normally, the pancreas produces the right amount of insulin to accommodate the quality of sugar. However, if you have diabetes, it's either the pancreas produces little or no insulin or the cells do not respond normally to the insulin. Sugar builds up in the blood, overflows into your urine and passes from your body unused. Over time, high blood sugar level will emerge and can damage the following:

**Eye -** Leading to diabetes retinopathy and possible blindness.

**Blood Vessels -** Increasing risk of heart attack, stroke, and peripheral arterial obstruction.

**Nerves-** Leading to diabetes neuropathy, foot sores. (Amputation can follow if not managed and possible amputation, paralysis of gastric nerves)

**Kidneys-** Leading to Kidney failure

## CAUSE (B)

Every cell in the human body needs energy in order to function. The body's primary energy source is glucose, a simple sugar resulting from the digestion of foods containing carbohydrates (sugars and starches). Glucose from the digested food circulates in the blood as a ready energy source for any cells that need it. Insulin is a hormone or chemical produced by cells in the pancreas, an organ located beneath the stomach. Insulin bonds to a receptor site on the outside of cell and acts like a key to open a doorway into the cell through which glucose can enter. Some of the glucose can be converted to concentrated energy sources like glycogen or fatty acids and saved for later use. When there is not enough insulin produced or when the doorway no longer recognizes the insulin key, glucose stays in the blood rather than entering the cells.

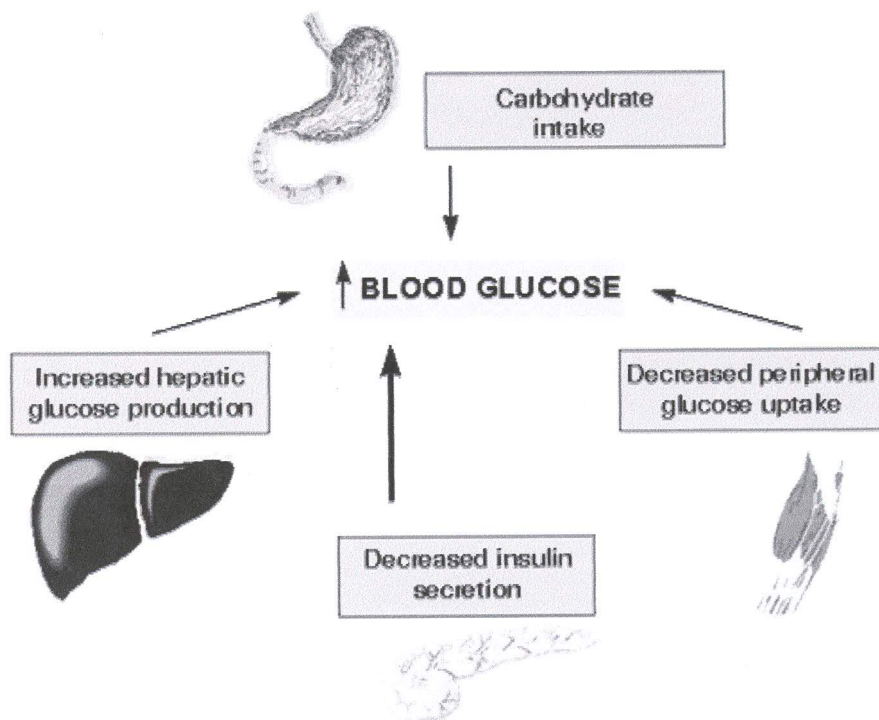


### **SYMPTOMS**

**Frequent urination, unexplained weight loss, Foot pain & numbness, Increased Thirst, Increased hunger, Delayed wound healing, frequent infection, Lack of energy, Blurred vision, Confusion, etc**

CORPS MEDICAL & RESCUE SERVICES

## ANATOMY OF DIABETES MELLITUS



### COMPLICATIONS

Diabetes has also been linked to impotence and digestion problems.

### PREVENTION

It is important to note that controlling blood pressure and blood glucose level plus regular screening and check-ups can help reduce risk of these complications. **DIABETES IS A SERIOUS CONDITION. DON'T JOKE WITH IT, DON'T ALLOW IT TO RULE YOUR LIFE. BE IN CONTROL AND BE INFORMED.**