



Is Type 2 Diabetes Reversible?

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Do you or someone you know have diabetes? With the incidence on the rise in the U.S, it is very likely that you know someone living with this condition. According to the CDC; more than 34 million Americans have diabetes (about 1 in 10), and approximately 90-95% of them have type 2 diabetes. Type 2 diabetes most often develops in people over age 45, but more and more children, teens, and young adults are also developing it.(1)

What is Type 2 diabetes?

Type 2 diabetes means that your body doesn't use insulin properly. Your body breaks down carbohydrates into blood sugar (blood glucose) and uses it for energy. Insulin is a hormone made by the pancreas, that the body needs to get glucose from the bloodstream into the cells of the body. If there is not enough insulin present, or insulin is ineffective, blood sugar levels increase causing serious damage to blood vessels. In some cases, people can control their blood sugar levels with healthy eating and exercise, others may need medication or insulin to help manage it. (2) The longer one has diabetes, the more likely medication might be needed due to the inability to produce sufficient insulin.

Is Type 2 diabetes reversible?

Type 2 diabetes is a progressive disease, but there are many things you can do to slow the progression or even reverse it. There is no cure for diabetes, however, when lifestyle improvements bring blood sugar numbers down to normal levels, diabetes is controlled or in remission.

Diabetes remission occurs when blood sugar levels return to normal without using medications for at least 1 year. A prolonged diabetes remission means that the same normal blood sugar levels are maintained for 5 years (3). A remission or a reversal of any type usually requires some weight loss in people who have been overweight or obese.

Who is likely to experience a reversal of type 2 diabetes?

Losing weight, maintaining weight loss, choosing healthy foods, being physical active, sleeping well, and managing stress can all improve blood sugar levels. These positive lifestyle changes have the potential to reverse type 2 diabetes.

MIIA Well Aware has a variety of online programs to help you.

- **Free recorded, fitness videos.** Try one out at: www.miiawinners.org
- **Nutrition, weight loss tips, and recipes.** Take a look: <https://www.emiia.org/well-aware/nutrition-weight-management>
- **Wellness webinars** including better sleep, managing stress, and more: www.miiawinners.org
- **Phone coaching**, free and confidential is available to BCBS/MIIA subscribers. Check it out at: <https://www.emiia.org/well-aware/wellness-coaching>
- **Team Blue Care Manager** – At no cost, BCBS/MIIA subscribers can take advantage of the services of a team blue care manager. Registered nurses, mental and behavioral health specialists, health coaches, and other professionals are ready to match their expertise to your needs. Go to: <https://www.bluecrossma.org/myblue/find-care/care-options/care-management> or call 1-800-392-0098, Mon. to Thu. 8:30 AM - 8 PM ET and Fri. 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM ET.

What else can you do?

MIIA Health Benefit Trust is pleased to offer a new diabetes support program called the Good Health Gateway® Diabetes Care Rewards Program. Starting July 1, 2021, you and your dependents are eligible to participate in the program if you are enrolled in a MIIA Health Benefits Trust sponsored health plan and have pre-diabetes or any type of diabetes. To learn more, visit MIIA.GoodHealthGateway.com or call the Good Health Gateway confidential Help Line at (800) 643-8028.

Also, in 2022, the MIIA wellness program is planning to launch a recorded webinar series on managing diabetes as well as a live, Zoom series on weight loss for pre-diabetics and diabetics. Stay tuned for more information on these upcoming programs.

Diabetes is managed mostly by you, with support from your health care team. This includes your primary care provider, podiatrist, dentist, eye doctor, registered dietitian nutritionist, diabetes educator, and pharmacist. Managing diabetes can be challenging, but everything you do to improve your health is worth it! (4)

Your best opportunity for stopping or slowing the disease process of diabetes is today. Be proactive now when you still have a chance to make a difference in your health. Take care of yourself emotionally and physically. The MIIA Wellness Program and Health Benefit Trust are here to support you. You are not alone. If you would like more information on our services and resources, please email Sandra Sarni at ssarni@mma.org.

References:

1. <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/basics/type2.html#:~:text=More%20than%2034%20million%20Americans,adults%20are%20also%20developing%20it>
2. <https://www.diabetes.org/diabetes>
3. <https://care.diabetesjournals.org/content/32/11/2133>
4. <https://www.diabetes.org/diabetes/type-2>