



CLINIC WE ARE YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM

CONVERSATIONS

MIDWESTERN UNIVERSITY CLINICS NEWSLETTER

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Are you at risk for prediabetes?

One in three adults has prediabetes, meaning blood sugar levels are higher than normal but not high enough to be considered diabetes. Prediabetes occurs when the body starts overproducing insulin, a hormone released by the pancreas, in turn causing blood sugars to rise. This can be a serious health condition, as it increases the chance of developing Type 2 diabetes, which can increase the risk for heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, and/or blindness.

The risk of developing prediabetes increases with age, having a family history of diabetes, being overweight, leading a sedentary lifestyle, and having elevated blood pressure. Certain ethnic groups, including African American, Hispanic/Latino American, American Indian, or Alaska Native, and women who have had gestational diabetes, also face a higher risk.

Prediabetes can be diagnosed with simple blood tests. Doctors generally start with a fasting blood sugar test, and if the test is elevated, run additional tests to check hemoglobin levels. If you are one of the 84 million Americans with this condition, the good news is that research shows that lifestyle changes such as improving diet, increasing exercise, and losing even a small amount of weight,



can reduce the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes by as much as 50 percent.

Kim Huntington-Alfano, D.O., of the Midwestern University Family Medicine Clinic, recommends scheduling an appointment with your physician to determine if you have prediabetes. Working with a healthcare team can allow for early detection and intervention to improve your health for years to come.

References: Centers for Disease Control & Prevention

Understanding Swallowing Disorders and How to Get Help

A swallowing disorder, also known as dysphagia, refers to difficulty eating or drinking and can occur in both children and adults. While there can be many causes, including stroke, traumatic brain injury, dementia, Parkinson's Disease, head/neck cancer, and cerebral palsy, the side effects can be serious and lead to malnutrition, dehydration, aspiration pneumonia, and compromised general health.

Common symptoms of dysphagia include:

- Poor oral control and/or drooling
- Food/liquid remaining in mouth after swallowing
- Feeling of food/liquid stuck in throat
- Pain when swallowing
- Wet or "gurgly" voice after eating/drinking
- Coughing and/or choking
- Watery eyes when eating/drinking



Should you be concerned that you or a loved one may have dysphagia, a qualified speech-language pathologist can assist with the diagnosis and management of the condition. Various treatment methods and techniques can be used to assist in the ability to safely and effectively swallow and improve quality of life.

References: The American Speech-Language Hearing Association



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