

Learn About Diabetes and Testing

A road map of diabetes: where to watch for problems

In diabetes, high blood glucose, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and other factors can all combine to create problems down the road. Fixing just one thing can help you stay in good running condition, but it's even better if you work on all of them at once.

stomach

Carrying extra fat around the middle (an "apple-shaped" body) can increase the risk of heart disease. Being very overweight can also make it hard for the cells to respond to insulin, and the body reacts by releasing more insulin.

feet

High blood glucose can damage nerves, leading to pain, weakness, and numbness in hands and feet (peripheral neuropathy).

brain

Insulin resistance (the cause of type 2 diabetes) is linked to an increased build-up of plaque in arteries, which can keep blood from flowing to the brain, causing stroke.

eyes

High blood glucose and high blood pressure can damage tiny blood vessels in the eyes (retinopathy).

heart

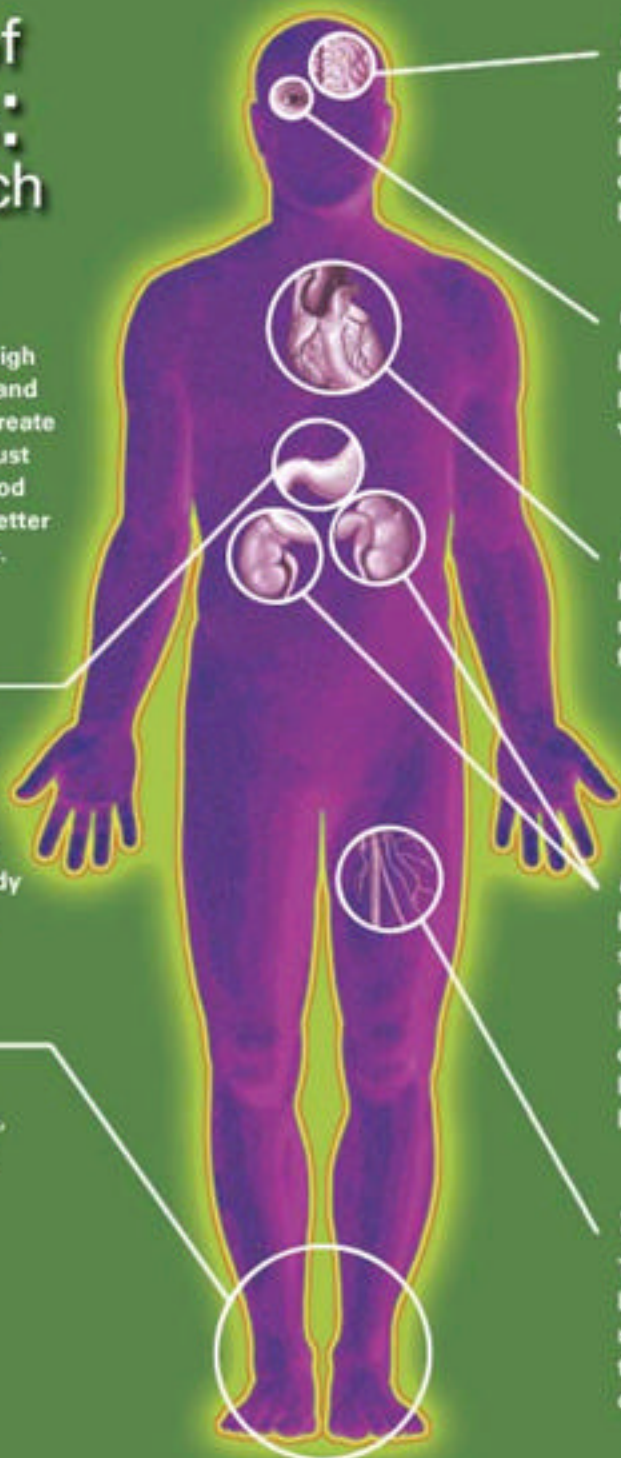
High blood pressure and insulin resistance together double the risk for heart disease.

kidneys

High blood pressure (which damages small blood vessels), and high blood glucose make the kidneys work too hard, and they become too weak to clean waste from the blood. The kidney damage, in turn, can cause blood pressure to rise higher.

veins

Too much "bad" cholesterol can clog blood vessels with plaque and insulin resistance can weaken them. Together, these can raise blood pressure to dangerous levels.



Additional Resources

You can also find helpful information at:

American Diabetes Association
800-DIABETES
www.diabetes.org

American Heart Association
800-AHA-USA-1
www.americanheart.org

National Kidney Foundation, Inc.
800-622-9010
www.kidney.org