

Diabetes: Are you at risk?



It is estimated that globally, approximately 50% of all diabetes cases are undiagnosed. This means almost 175 million people are living with diabetes and they don't know it. How do you know if you're at risk? Find out now.

Two factors that increase your risk of developing type 2 diabetes that you have no control over:

1. *Your genes.*

The development of type 2 diabetes is highly associated with lifestyle factors and your environment. Your genetic make-up increases your risk of how susceptible to these lifestyle and environmental factors you are.

If someone in your immediate family, like your mother or father, has diabetes, your risk of developing diabetes increases two to three times.

2. *Your gender.*

According to the World Health Organisation, in South Africa, Cameroon, and Uganda, women are at a higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes, as a study found women in these countries are more likely to be obese and overweight.

In Ghana, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone, it is opposite, with men being more at risk because they're more likely to be obese or overweight.

Two factors that increase your risk of developing type 2 diabetes that you can control:

1. *Dietary habits.*

Drinking sweetened beverages, eating food that contains simple or refined sugars, and eating fewer fruit and vegetables are associated with a higher risk of type 2 diabetes.

Eating food that contains omega 3 fatty acids, and that have a low glycaemic index are associated with a lower risk of type 2 diabetes.

2. *Sleeping habits.*

Not only is there a link between sleeping too little or sleeping too much (less than six hours, or more than nine) and type 2 diabetes, obstructive sleep apnoea, and diabetes are also highly associated.

If you have any of these four risk factors, it's essential you speak to your doctor about regular checks of your blood sugar. Instead of being one of the 50% living with the risks of undiagnosed diabetes, be one of the 50% who manages it.