



# GESTATIONAL DIABETES

## WHAT IS GESTATIONAL DIABETES

- Gestational Diabetes is diabetes that a woman can develop during pregnancy.
- About 1 in 20 pregnant women will develop Gestational Diabetes during pregnancy.
- When Gestational Diabetes is detected early, it can be managed and controlled to prevent complications for both you and your baby.

## WHAT CAUSES GESTATIONAL DIABETES?

- We do not know all the causes of Gestational Diabetes.
- When you have diabetes, your body cannot use sugar and carbohydrates that you consume in foods to make energy. Your body collects extra sugar in your blood.
- Placental hormones can cause high blood sugars.
- Risk factors include being overweight, not being physically active, having prediabetes or gestational diabetes in a previous pregnancy having diabetes in your family, having polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS), or multiple gestation.

## HOW WILL I KNOW IF I HAVE GESTATIONAL DIABETES?

- If you do not have any risk factors, screening is done at 28 weeks gestation.
- If you have risk factors, you will be screened at 15 weeks gestation and at 28 weeks gestation.
- Screening includes a 50-gram, 1-hour glucose tolerance test.
- This will be further explained to you at your upcoming prenatal visits.

## CAN GESTATIONAL DIABETES BE CONTROLLED?

- Working with your doctor and following a plan can help you have a healthy pregnancy and baby.
- If you are diagnosed with Gestational Diabetes, you will learn how to manage your diabetes by meal planning, blood glucose monitoring, and medication if needed.
- You will receive education and training on how to monitor and record your blood sugars.
- Staying active, following the recommended diet, and taking your prescribed medications if needed, will help control your blood sugars.

## WHAT ARE SOME OF THE RISKS OF UNCONTROLLED GESTATIONAL DIABETES TO ME AND MY BABY?

- Your baby can grow very large, which in turn can lead to problems such as injured nerves in the baby's shoulder and/or a broken collarbone during delivery
- Your baby may have hypoglycemia (low blood sugars) after birth.
- You have a higher risk of needing a cesarean section.
- You have a higher risk of developing pre-eclampsia.

## WHAT HAPPENS TO MY DIABETES AFTER I DELIVER?

- After the delivery of the placenta, your blood sugar should return to normal. However, there is a small percentage of women for whom this does not occur.
- You should have a test at 6 weeks after the birth to be sure your blood sugar returns to normal.
- If you have Gestational Diabetes, you are at an increased risk of developing Type 2 Diabetes later in life.