

***Small Steps, Big Rewards for Families with a History of Gestational Diabetes***  
by the [National Diabetes Education Program](#)

Gestational diabetes affects women during pregnancy and causes a lifelong risk for diabetes. Children of women with a history of gestational diabetes are also at risk, especially if they are overweight. But families can take small steps to prevent or delay type 2 diabetes.



If you had gestational diabetes, you can prevent type 2 diabetes by losing a small amount of weight by being more physically active and making healthy food choices. And your children can lower their risk for type 2 diabetes if they do not become overweight. The National Diabetes Education Program (NDEP) suggests taking these small steps to prevent diabetes:

**Tips for Mothers:**

- If you have been diagnosed with gestational diabetes, get tested for diabetes six to 12 weeks after your baby is born, then every one to two years.
- Breastfeed your baby. It may lower your child's risk for type 2 diabetes.
- Try to reach your pre-pregnancy weight six to 12 months after your baby is born. Then, if you still weigh too much, work to lose at least 5 to 7 percent (10 to 14 pounds if you weigh 200 pounds) of your body weight.
- Be physically active at least 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week and eat smaller portions of healthy foods to help you reach and stay at a healthy weight.

**Tips for the Family:**

- Tell your child's doctor that you had gestational diabetes and ask for an eating plan for your child.
- Follow a healthy lifestyle as a family. Serve your children healthy foods such as fruits and vegetables, fish, lean meats, dry beans and peas, whole grains, and low-fat or skim milk and cheese. Choose water to drink.
- Help your children be physically active at least 60 minutes a day and limit TV and inactive video and computer game time to an hour or two a day.

Read NDEP's [It's Never Too Early to Prevent Diabetes. A Lifetime of Small Steps for a Healthy Family](#) tip sheet (also available in [Spanish](#)) and download or order free diabetes prevention materials by visiting [www.YourDiabetesInfo.org](http://www.YourDiabetesInfo.org) or calling 1-888-693-NDEP (6337). For more information about helping children maintain a healthy weight, contact the [Weight-control Information Network](#) at [www.win.niddk.nih.gov](http://www.win.niddk.nih.gov) or 1-877-946-4627.

*The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' National Diabetes Education Program is jointly sponsored by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), with the support of more than 200 partner organizations.*