gestational diabetes

A window of opportunity to improve maternal and child health and slow down the diabetes pandemic
Diabetes is a growing global health emergency impacting the lives of more and more people every day

415 MILLION adults have diabetes.¹ By 2040, this will rise to 642 MILLION.¹ A person with diabetes has high blood sugar (hyperglycaemia) either because the body is not producing enough insulin or because the body does not respond properly to insulin.¹

This rise in the number of people with diabetes is associated with ageing populations, economic development, increasing urbanisation, less healthy diets and reduced physical activity.²

High blood sugar is one of the most common medical conditions associated with pregnancy¹

20.9 MILLION (16.2%) live births were affected by some form of high blood sugar in pregnancy in 2015.¹ 85% OF CASES were due to gestational diabetes (GDM), a temporary type of diabetes that in most cases disappears after birth.¹

GDM appears during pregnancy and can lead to serious health risks for both mother and child.¹ It is also associated with an increased risk of both mother and child developing type 2 diabetes later in life.³⁴
GDM is the leading cause of high blood sugar in pregnancy, affecting approximately 18 million live births\textsuperscript{1}

\textbf{ONE IN SEVEN}

live births is affected by GDM\textsuperscript{1}
Untreated GDM is associated with serious short-term complications for both mother and child\textsuperscript{5,6}

**LARGE BABIES (MACROSOMIA)**
Macrosomia is common in cases where GDM is not recognised and treated. As many as \textbf{15–45\% of newborns to mothers with GDM} are affected.\textsuperscript{7}

**STILLBIRTHS AND NEWBORN DEATHS**
Pregnancies complicated by GDM also have a \textbf{fourfold increased risk of stillbirth and death} in the first week of life.\textsuperscript{8} Almost 3 million babies are stillborn every year,\textsuperscript{9} with GDM being a major contributor.

**PRE-ECLAMPSIA**
Women with GDM are at increased risk of pre-eclampsia\textsuperscript{10–13} – a \textbf{leading cause of maternal deaths} due to childbirth and stillbirths worldwide.\textsuperscript{14,15}

**PRE-TERM BIRTHS**
High blood sugar in pregnancy increases the risk of early labour and delivery.\textsuperscript{16}

**OTHER COMPLICATIONS**
Children born to women with GDM are at increased risk of respiratory distress, hypoglycaemia, jaundice and other complications.\textsuperscript{16}

The risk of complications increases as maternal blood glucose levels rise.\textsuperscript{6}
GDM can have a long-term health impact on both mother and child\textsuperscript{3,16,17}

\textbf{WOMEN} with GDM are at increased risk of developing diabetes and other non-communicable diseases (NCDs), such as cardiovascular disease, later in life.\textsuperscript{16}

Approximately 50\% of women with GDM go on to develop \textbf{type 2 diabetes within five years} of pregnancy.\textsuperscript{17}

\textbf{CHILDREN} born to women with GDM are at increased risk of developing diabetes, obesity, hypertension and metabolic syndrome.\textsuperscript{16}

Children born to women with GDM are up to \textbf{8 times more likely} to develop \textbf{type 2 diabetes}\textsuperscript{3} and \textbf{obesity} in their teens or early adulthood.\textsuperscript{16}
Integrating GDM testing and management into maternal health interventions can reduce both the short- and long-term impacts of diabetes.

Lifestyle changes are often sufficient to achieve near-normal blood sugar control levels.\(^{18}\)

A number of professional and patient organisations advocate for universal testing of pregnant women to detect GDM:

- International Association of the Diabetes and Pregnancy Study Groups (IADPSG)\(^{19}\)
- International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics (FIGO)\(^{16}\)
- International Diabetes Federation (IDF)\(^{20}\)
Testing for GDM during pregnancy offers a window of opportunity to reduce preventable maternal morbidity and mortality, and slow down the rising type 2 diabetes pandemic²¹

REFERENCES

Our contribution

As a leader in diabetes care, we work to prevent, treat and ultimately cure diabetes.

In 2009, we launched the Changing Diabetes® in Pregnancy programme to create awareness of the links between diabetes and pregnancy.

Together with diabetes and maternal health communities, and through collaboration with professional societies, we are working to raise awareness of the challenges and opportunities in addressing GDM and to improve access to diagnosis and care.

See more at novonordisk.com/cdip

“I was really surprised to find out my condition could be controlled by physical activity and the right food,” says Diana Torrecilla, who had GDM during her last pregnancy. She was part of the Novo Nordisk-supported Vida Nueva project in Colombia.