Most of the food we eat is broken down by our bodies into glucose, the form of sugar that's found in the blood. Glucose is the main source of fuel for the body. When sugar enters your bloodstream, a hormone called insulin carries the sugar from your blood into your cells, where the sugar is used for energy. The pancreas automatically produces the right amount of insulin to move glucose from your blood into your cells. In people with diabetes, however, the pancreas either produces little or no insulin, or the cells do not respond appropriately to the insulin that is produced. Glucose builds up in the blood, overflows into the urine, and passes out of the body. Thus, the body loses its main source of fuel even though the blood contains large amounts of glucose.

The cause of diabetes continues to be a mystery, although both genetics and environmental factors—such as obesity and lack of exercise—appear to play roles.

**Glucose** (also known as blood sugar) provides energy to your body—but only with the help of insulin, which is produced by your pancreas.

There are 23.6 million children and adults in the United States, or 7.8% of the population, who have diabetes. While an estimated 17.9 million have been diagnosed with diabetes, unfortunately, 5.7 million people (or nearly one quarter) are unaware that they have the disease!

You can get your blood sugar checked by visiting your doctor or participating in a health screening. The table below helps you to understand glucose readings.

You can manage your risk of diabetes by:
- Losing extra weight
- Skipping fad diets
- Getting plenty of fiber and whole grains
- Getting more physical activity (aim for at least 30 minutes/day most days of the week)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FASTING GLUCOSE</th>
<th>NON-FASTING GLUCOSE (two hours after a meal)</th>
<th>INDICATES:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 100 mg/dL</td>
<td>Between 140 mg/dL and 199 mg/dL</td>
<td>Normal/desirable blood sugar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Check with your doctor if your glucose reading is outside of these ranges.

**JANE’S NUMBERS SHOW...**

During her health screening on campus, Jane’s blood sugar reading was 150 mg/dL. A follow-up fasting glucose test (ordered by Jane’s doctor) showed that Jane’s blood sugar was still higher than normal, so she’s making some changes to her diet and lifestyle that will hopefully improve her blood sugar results. She’s joined Weight Watchers at Work and is walking in her neighborhood a couple of days per week.

...**DIET AND EXERCISE ARE THE WAY TO GO**