

# ¿Could You Have Prediabetes?

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## **Latinas are at high risk of having prediabetes. Find out more!**

Today we are asking a hard question, Comadres: ¿Could you have prediabetes?

### **Take the quiz!**

1. Are you overweight? Use this [BMI chart](#) to get more information.
2. Are you Latina?
3. Did you have a baby that weighed more than 9 lbs.?
4. Do you have a brother, sister, mom or dad with diabetes?
5. Do you get very little or no exercise?
6. Are you between the ages of 45 and 65?

If you answered yes to 3 or more of these questions, it doesn't necessarily mean you have prediabetes, but you should get make an appointment to get it checked out.

When you find out if you have prediabetes, don't panic. First of all, be grateful that you found out! You have a chance to dodge diabetes, Comadre. The research is clear and the take-away is this:

## **You can prevent or delay diabetes.**

Now, ask yourself, ¿Am I ready to make small changes that will pay off big?

If you answered, yes, ¡Bienvenidas a De Las Mías! Follow our [De Las Mías Guidelines](#) and you will be well on your way to preventing diabetes. Talk to your doctor or dietitian and show them the De Las Mías checklist. We are sure they will approve!

My nana had diabetes, my tía Paqui had it. My brother has it and probably half of my mother's side of the family had it and didn't know it. That's a common story among Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans and Native Americans of North America. That's the way it is but that is not the way it has to be.

## **There's Hope!**

The research tells us that you can prevent or delay diabetes. By "prevent," we mean that you could actually keep from getting it. And by "delay," we mean that you might get it anyway, but

way later than if you had done nothing. (You could have gotten it by 45 but you didn't get it until you were 65.) That's like a discount. Having diabetes is no walk in the park. You want to hold off for as long as you can. But let's be clear: If you get it, don't blame yourself, okay? Just try your best and be kind to yourself. We are looking for improvements here and not perfection.



So, here's my story...

About 15 years ago, I was about 30 pounds overweight and pretty sedentary because my back condition was preventing me from walking for too long. I felt low energy and not very attractive. Truth be told I was probably a little depressed.

Feeling kind of sluggish and down, I went to our family doctor and he was someone we really trusted. He sent me for blood work and when I went back, he looked at my chart and said, "Well, I have some good news and some bad news. What do you want first?"

I said, "The bad news."

"The bad news is that you have prediabetes."

I was stunned but not surprised. I knew my family history and my eating habits. Not to mention 'couch potato.'

"What's the good news?" I asked.

"You have prediabetes."

"Say, what?"

And that is when he told me that I had a golden opportunity.

"I say golden opportunity, because you have a chance to turn this around. If you hadn't gotten checked, you wouldn't know. So here you are at an important crossroad."

He told me that just by losing 5%-7% of my weight I could possibly reverse prediabetes. He also recommended that I get as physically fit as possible.

I hemmed and hawed and said, "Well, I have a lot of back pain right now and I can't walk for very long."

"Do you have a bike?"

Oh yeah, my bike! My old childhood friend!

He also suggested I take a therapeutic yoga class so I could start getting my back in shape and that I try to walk a little at a time.

"If you can't go for 30, go for 15. If you can't go for 15, go for 10. If you can't walk, bike. And if you can't bike, swim. If you can't swim, dance. Whatever works, just move your body, because if you don't, you are going to be one unhappy old woman."

"Wow, kind of harsh," I thought with tears in my eyes.

He looked at me with those sad blue eyes and said, "I'm sorry, Ana, but I know you. I know you can do this."

The truth stung, but I paid attention.

First of all, I went looking for my bike. It was an old beater and my husband helped me pull it down from the rafters in the garage. We cleaned it up and pumped up the tires. I rode it around the neighborhood for a few days and then I realized that I needed to replace it. So I got myself a nice Raleigh like the one I had in college. It didn't break the bank, and it was so much lighter than the fat tire clunker I had brought back to life. I got a hybrid bike because in Santa Fe where I live there are a lot of dirt roads. I bought this stuff called 'green slime' to protect my tires from goatheads. (Nasty, nasty balls of thorns!) I got an ugly helmet. I got bike shorts. (Yeah, I did.)

Then, I made other changes... I stopped eating refined sugar and carbs. I stopped drinking sugary soft drinks and started eating more fruits and veggies. I didn't go crazy. I just started making small changes and it worked!

A month or two later, I took a yoga class from a 70-year-old woman who kicked my butt every Friday.

And over a period of about 6 months, I lost 24 pounds.



I went back and checked my blood sugar again in about 9 months, and the prediabetes was gone.

That was 15 years ago, and I still ride every day. I walk 30 minutes a day. And when I can't walk for 30, because my back hurts, I walk for 15 and when I can't walk for 15, I walk for 10. And if I can't walk for 10, well, you get the picture...

Change is possible, Comadres. And if you can change one thing, you can change everything.

I co-founded De Las Mías because I want us to be healthy and strong. I want our children to be healthy, and I want our grandchildren to be healthy, active and strong.

It's a journey, Comadres, and you don't have to do it alone. We are here.

Are you ready?

¡Acompáñanos!