

Q. Is diabetes curable?

A. The short answer is “yes, often,” but not always. By making the following major lifestyle changes, you could normalize your blood sugar levels:

- Lose any amount of excess weight.
- Get regular physical exercise such as walking briskly for 30 or more minutes a day.
- Eat primarily a plant-based diet – including more high-fiber foods and whole grains.
- Reduce your intake of refined foods (such as white bread, white rice, chips, soft drinks, sugar, and sweets).
- Limit your intake of red and processed meats. Also, cut back on saturated fats and trans fats. In their place, eat healthy fats (such as polyunsaturated vegetable oils and nuts).
- Don't smoke.

By making these changes, many diabetics are able to keep their blood sugar levels in control without



taking medication. These changes can also prevent damage to the arteries, nerves, eyes, kidneys, and other organs.

However, if a person who had high blood sugar were to stop making these positive changes, the high blood sugar would quickly return. So in that respect, no, making positive lifestyle changes would not have cured diabetes. These lifestyle changes would have only brought it into remission.

Diabetes will often return later in life because the underlying problem is still there. This is true even for those who have controlled it for years with careful living. But because they were able to control it for years, the damage normally done to their bodies is much less. And there are fewer complications.

The bottom line is yes, there's a lot you can do to minimize the negative effects of diabetes through lifestyle change. In one study, for example, diabetics who simply exercised daily had their risk of death cut in half over the 10-year study.

