

What is Gestational Diabetes Mellitus? (GDM)

GDM is an abnormality in glucose metabolism (blood sugar levels) first discovered during pregnancy that does not reach the level of diabetes.

Why does GDM occur?



- ★ A baby's main source of nutrition is glucose from the mother. The mother sends nutrients (glucose) to the baby through the placenta.
- ★ As the weeks of pregnancy progress, the baby grows larger. Inside the mother's body, insulin (the hormone that lowers blood sugar) becomes less effective, and the body naturally changes in a way that raises blood sugar levels. As a result, the baby receives enough glucose needed for growth.
- ★ GDM is a condition where blood sugar levels become too high during pregnancy. Even if your blood sugar levels were normal before pregnancy, you can still develop gestational diabetes.



GDM is an important signal from the baby that tells us about the mother's physical condition and changes. To ensure that both mother and baby can safely and securely reach childbirth, it is important to have regular internal medicine checkups during pregnancy and to monitor progress (blood sugar levels).

【Effects of GDM】

Effects on the mother



Premature birth
An increase in amniotic fluid (polyhydramnios)
Difficult delivery
Hypertensive Disorders of Pregnancy (HDP)
Onset of diabetes in the future

Effects on the baby



Large baby (Macrosomia)
Low blood sugar after birth
Obesity in the future

Is it enough to be careful about GDM only during pregnancy?



- ★ Women diagnosed with GDM are said to have a **7.43 times higher risk** of developing diabetes in the future compared to pregnant women who did not have blood sugar abnormalities during pregnancy.
- ★ After childbirth, blood sugar levels often temporarily return to normal. However, considering the future risk of developing diabetes, it is important to undergo regular checkups. (In Hamamatsu City, it is recommended to have a blood sugar test once a year for five years after childbirth.)



After giving birth, have your blood sugar tested at a medical institution within 1~3 months. Based on the results of the glucose tolerance test, you will discuss your future follow-up schedule with your doctor.

Think about your own health 10 or 20 years from now, and protect yourself by having a regular checkups.

1) Lancet 2009 ; 373:1773-1779