

Health Watch -- New Diabetes Therapy

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A new way of treating diabetes could help eliminate a side effect.

More than 15 million Americans have type-2 – or adult-onset – diabetes. Age, obesity and lack of exercise are risk factors that contribute to the disease, and diabetes can have deadly results. Diabetes occurs when the body no longer effectively uses insulin to regulate blood sugar. Over time, high blood sugar levels damage blood vessels and nerves, leading to complications like blindness, stroke, and kidney disease.

One of the most common ways of managing diabetes is to take insulin in conjunction with a drug for regulating blood sugar levels and helping the body use its own insulin more effectively. But there's a trade-off – while patients may lower their blood sugar levels they also tend to gain weight and may need to take more insulin.

Now researchers at UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas have found that a triple therapy – insulin plus two drugs – not only helps patients regulate their blood sugar, but also keeps them from gaining more weight. Some patients were even able to lose weight. All of the patients in the study lowered their blood sugar to recommended levels without having to take more insulin. Results were even better when the insulin and drugs were given in a particular order.

[Dr. Philip Raskin](#), the UT Southwestern doctor who was senior author of the study, says this study is an important step toward effectively treating type 2 diabetes and perhaps preventing dangerous complications.

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