

Managing diabetes

Your healthcare professionals will help you to find ways to keep your blood sugar levels steady.

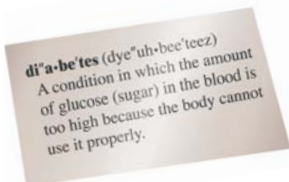
- You can take more exercise to use up the sugar in your blood.
- You can make healthy food choices too.
- Talk to them about any changes you should make to your diet and ask about the sort of exercise you can take.

In addition, you will probably be given medical treatment:

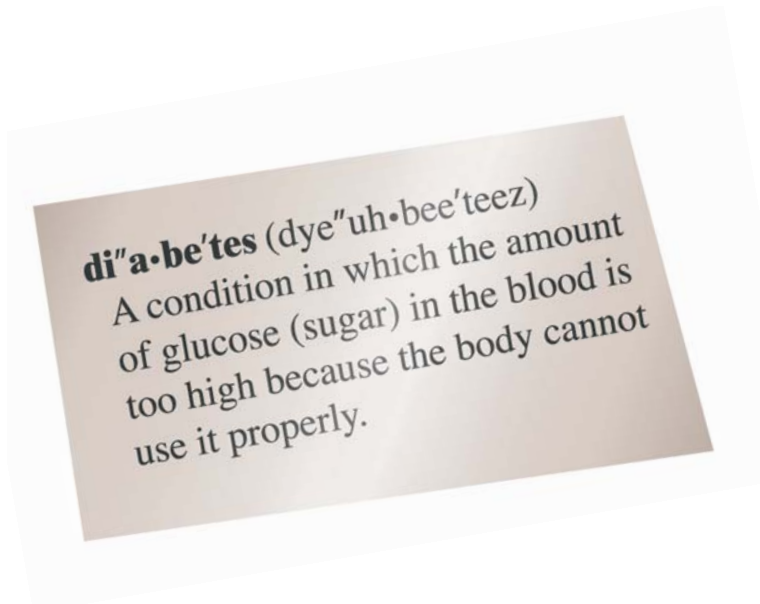
- If you have type 2 diabetes you may be given tablets which either:
 - Make your cells more sensitive to the insulin you naturally produce.
 - Or stimulate your pancreas to produce more insulin.
- If you have type 1 diabetes, or if you have type 2 diabetes and tablets are not enough, you will need to inject insulin.

However your diabetes is treated, you need to know how much sugar is in your blood and to find out what affects your levels. You may be asked to:

- Test your blood sugar levels regularly.
- Or, test at the same times each day and look for patterns in your results.
- Your healthcare professionals will explain when you should test your blood sugar levels and will help you understand what the patterns mean. You should be taught how you can use this information to help to smooth out your blood sugar levels.



What is diabetes?



Anyone who uses an Abbott Diabetes Care meter can become a member of our **Friends for Life programme.**

Once a member, you are entitled to:

- FREE help and advice
- FREE replacement products and batteries
- FREE monitoring support
- FREE educational materials

To join, send back the warranty card that came with your Abbott Diabetes Care meter. Or, call the Customer Care Line or register online at **www.friendsforlife.org.uk**

UK Customer Care Line – 0500 467 466

(Mon-Fri, 8am-5.30pm)

Ireland Customer Care Line – 1 800 776633

(Mon-Fri, 8am-5.30pm)

Leaflet produced by Abbott Diabetes Care, manufacturer of



FreeStyle mini
Blood Glucose Monitoring System



Optium Xceed™

Ask your nurse or pharmacist for more information

What is diabetes?

Diabetes is a condition affecting the endocrine system (your glands and the hormones that they produce), where the pancreas stops producing insulin or produces too little; or where the cells in your body are resistant to the insulin that your pancreas produces.

- Insulin is the hormone which 'unlocks' the cells in your body and allows the sugar (glucose) in your blood to be used for energy at once or to be stored away to be used later on.
- Blood sugar comes from carbohydrates in the food you eat. These are broken down in your digestive system and then transported around your body to be used as fuel for the energy we need in everyday life.
- Unless you have enough insulin, the sugar in your blood can't be used up, so your levels will rise.
- If left untreated, high blood sugar levels can cause long-term health problems. However, because your diabetes has been diagnosed, you now have the chance to look after yourself properly, and you may be able to avoid some of the risks.



The types of diabetes and the symptoms

- There are two main types of diabetes, type 1 and type 2, but pregnant women sometimes develop a 3rd type, called gestational diabetes.*
- They have different causes, so they are treated differently.
- As the causes are closely related, the symptoms are very similar for all types.

You may feel:

- Dehydrated and very thirsty.
- A need to go to the toilet more often.
- Excessively tired.
- Your vision may be blurred.
- You may lose weight.
- You may experience itching in the genital area or have frequent episodes of thrush.
- Cuts and wounds may be very slow to heal.
- You may have recurrent infections (such as boils).

** We have produced a separate leaflet all about gestational diabetes. Ask your Diabetes Specialist Nurse for a copy.*



Type 1 diabetes

- Type 1 diabetes occurs when the cells in the pancreas that produce insulin are damaged. So the pancreas eventually stops producing any insulin at all.
- It usually affects young people, although it can occur at any age and can develop very quickly over a short space of time.
- It is controlled with insulin injections. The amount of insulin you need is balanced against the levels of sugar in your blood.

Type 2 diabetes

- Type 2 diabetes occurs when:
 - The cells in your body are resistant to the effects of insulin.
 - Your pancreas doesn't produce enough insulin.
 - Or a combination of the two.
- It develops slowly and gradually over a long period of time, so the symptoms may not be noticed and the condition often goes undiagnosed.
- Type 2 diabetes is usually found in middle aged or elderly people, but it is increasingly being diagnosed in early adulthood and sometimes in childhood.
- It generally runs in families and is particularly prevalent in certain ethnic groups. Almost one in five people of South Asian descent is likely to get type 2 diabetes.*
- It can sometimes be treated with diet and exercise. If that is not enough to control it, you will be given tablets, or you may need to move on to insulin injections.

** Diabetes in the UK 2004: A report from Diabetes UK: October 2004*