

Diabetes (Type 2)

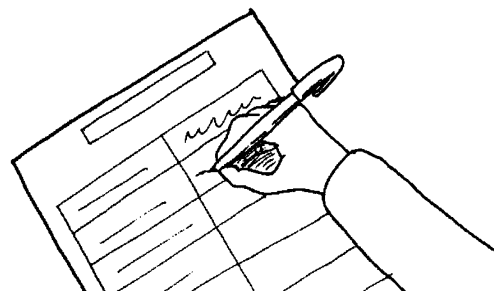
A guide for People with Learning Disabilities and Carers



How many people have diabetes?

There are about 2 million people in England with diabetes. You are not on your own.

There may be many more people who have the symptoms of diabetes. They may not know that they may have diabetes



What is diabetes?

Diabetes is when the amount of sugar (glucose) in the blood is too high.

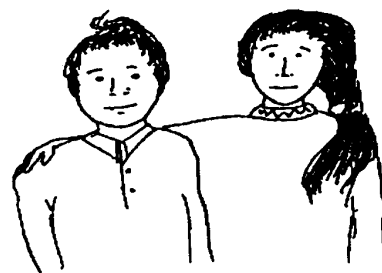
This can happen because the body is unable to produce enough insulin. Insulin helps the body to use sugar by turning it into energy.

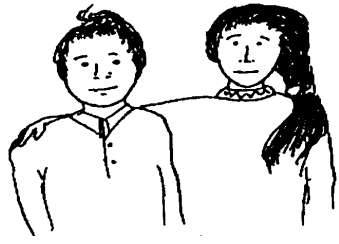
This does not happen in diabetes causing you to become tired.



The main symptoms of diabetes are

- feeling very tired
- having to go to the toilet frequently (urine)
- weight loss
- blurred vision





Those most at risk of developing Type 2 diabetes are:

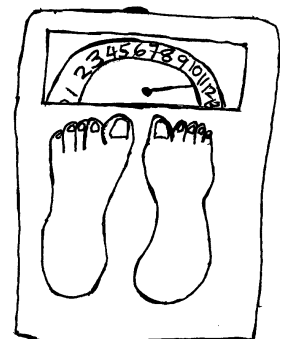
- people with a family history of diabetes
- people over 40 years old
- people who are overweight
- people of Asian or Afro-Caribbean origin

What are the health risks associated with diabetes?

- An increased risk of heart attacks and stroke
- Changes to the eyes
- Loss of feeling (sensation) particularly in feet
- Changes in circulation

What can I do to keep fit and healthy?

- Eat a healthy diet
- Exercise regularly
- Keep your weight down
- Stop smoking
- Visit your doctor regularly (he or she will tell you how often to come to the surgery)



Eating well with diabetes

It is very important that you keep to a healthy diet now that you have diabetes. The diet for people with diabetes is a balanced healthy diet, the same kind that is recommended for the rest of the population.

It should be low in fat, sugar and salt, with plenty of fruit and vegetables and meals including some starchy foods, such as bread, potatoes, cereals, pasta and rice.

Foods can be divided into four main groups:

Fruit and vegetables

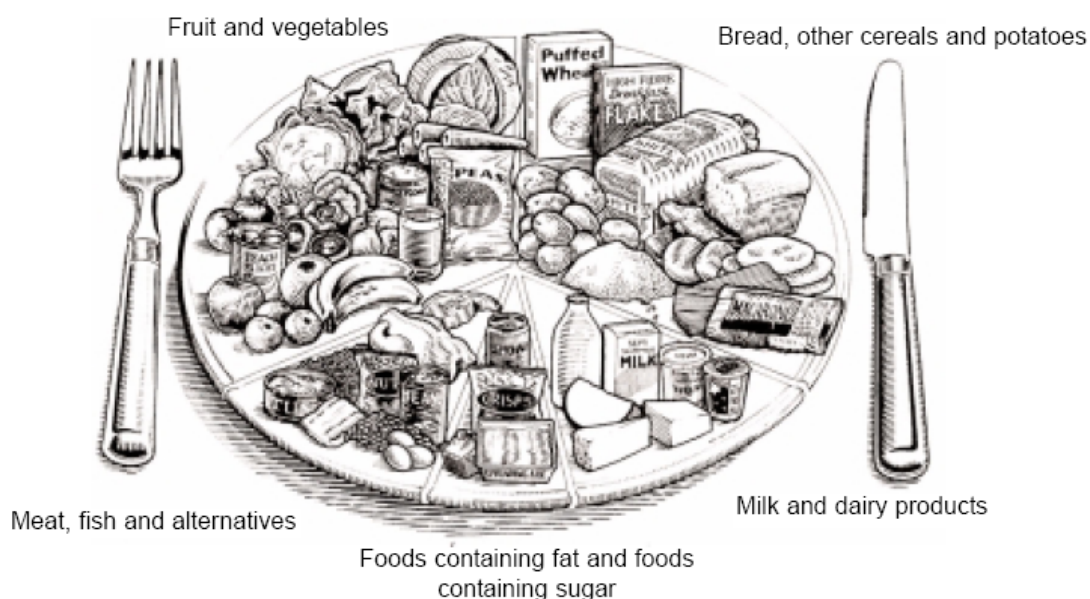
Bread, cereals and potatoes

Meat and fish

Milk and dairy products

In order for us to enjoy a balanced diet we need to eat foods from all these groups.

Some foods also contain high amounts of sugar and fat. These foods should be avoided by people with diabetes.



Taking care of your health.

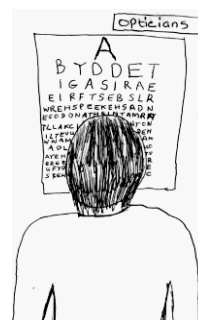
Your doctor or nurse will tell you what you will need to do to remain healthy.

Some of the things that he or she may suggest are:

Blood tests to check the level of sugar in the blood.

Yearly eye health checks. You will normally be sent an invitation to come into the surgery.

You should take any medication that your doctor has given you.



Taking care of your Feet

It is important that you also look after your feet and visit a podiatrist if your doctor or nurse advises this.

Before putting on shoes you should check that there are no sharp objects or anything that could cause the shoes to rub

Exercise and sport

Daily exercise and activity help maintain health for people with diabetes.

- It helps to keep weight stable
- It helps to lower blood glucose
- It has a protective effect on the heart
- It creates a sense of well being

You do not need to run a marathon. If you are not used to exercise, start gently. As your body gets used to exercising, you can start to exercise for longer each time.

Try to make time for exercise every day. You could try walking, dancing or swimming. Think about if you could exercise with others.

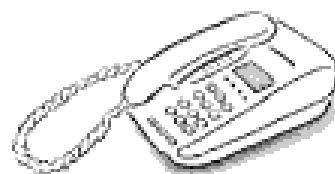
You can speak to your GP or nurse if you are unsure.

How can I get more information about diabetes?

- You can speak your doctor or Practice Nurse

Their telephone number is:

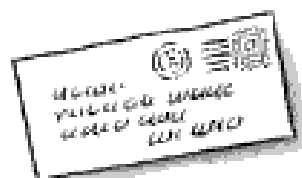
- The Diabetes Educators:
- Your Community Nurse:



Your Nurse or Doctor may use this space for any information that is important to you

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