What is diabetes?

Sometimes your body does not make enough insulin.

Sometimes your body can’t use insulin properly.

Insulin helps you to use blood sugar. It helps you to be active.

People with diabetes get too much sugar in their blood.
Diabetes can happen to anyone.

You will always have diabetes, but the right treatment will help you to stay well.
There are 2 kinds of diabetes - **Type 1** and **Type 2**. We have got **Type 2** diabetes.

Type 2 diabetes usually starts in people after the age of 40.
See a doctor

Go to a doctor. Your doctor will give you a check-up.

What is diabetes?

Your doctor will tell you what diabetes is.
You can talk to the nurse about diabetes.
You might get to see a dietitian who knows about food and health.

They will help you to choose the right foods to eat.
Useful information

Your doctor or nurse will tell you about Diabetes UK and how it can help you.
Will I feel better?

Will my treatment make me feel better?

Yes, but...

Sometimes you may feel unwell.

This could be because your blood sugar is too high or too low.
What is blood sugar?

Sometimes you need a blood test to check your blood sugar.

Your body makes blood sugar when you eat bread, potatoes, and sweet things like biscuits.
How do you know if your blood sugar is high?

- You may feel very thirsty.
- You may go to the loo a lot.
- You may feel more tired than usual.
Low blood sugar

How do you know if your blood sugar is low?

- You may feel sweaty.
- You may feel very tired and grumpy.
- You may feel shaky or dizzy.

What to do when you have Type 2 diabetes
What should I do?

Make sure that you:

- Take the right medicine
- Eat the right food
- Have regular exercise

If you still feel unwell, you must see your doctor or nurse.
As your body does not make enough insulin or does not use it properly, you may need to take tablets.

- Sometimes you may need injections.
- You need to eat a healthy diet.
- You need to exercise.
Eat regular meals

Don’t miss meals.
They will help your body to stay healthy.

- Breakfast
- Lunch
- Dinner
Choose the right foods

Choose good healthy foods.
Eat fruit and vegetable, beans and lentils, meat, fish and dairy products.

Fruit and vegetables
Try to eat 5 servings every day.

Bread, rice, potatoes, pasta and other starchy foods
Try to eat some of these every day.

Meat, fish, eggs, nuts, beans, milk and dairy foods
You can eat some of these every day.
Some foods have a lot of fat and sugar in them. Don’t eat too much of them.

- Chips
- Butter or margarine
- Cakes & biscuits
- Cheese
- Pastry
- Crisps & snacks
- Sugary fizzy drinks

Choose low-fat foods.
Exercise is good for you

What to do when you have Type 2 diabetes
When you are ill

If you are ill or have a cold, you must still take your tablets for diabetes. **This is very important.**

But if you are being sick or have diarrhoea, call your doctor or nurse for advice.
It is important to have regular check-ups.
You should see your doctor or nurse at least once every year for a full check-up.

You can tell the doctor or nurse if you have any problems with your diabetes.
Check-ups

You will need to have check-ups for:

Your feet

Your eyes

Your diet

Your blood pressure

The doctor or nurse may check your wee or take some blood
Remember

It is very important to follow the treatment you are given properly.
Remember

- Eat the right foods
- Take the medication at the right time
- Take some exercise to stay fit

If you do all of this it will help you to keep well.

If you are worried about any of this, talk to your doctor or nurse.
For more information contact:

Diabetes UK
Macleod House
10 Parkway
London, NW1 7AA

Web: www.diabetes.org.uk

Telephone Diabetes UK Careline:
Tel: 0345 123 2399
(calls may be recorded for quality and training purposes)

Email: careline@diabetes.org.uk
This leaflet has been made by:

Diabetes UK
CARE. CONNECT. CAMPAIGN.

The leading UK diabetes charity that cares for, connects with and campaigns alongside people with or at risk of diabetes.

With help from CHANGE, a leading national human rights organisation led by disabled people.

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