

FACTSHEET

Are you at risk?



What is diabetes?

Diabetes occurs when the body cannot produce enough insulin, or when the insulin that the body makes does not work properly. Insulin is a hormone produced in the pancreas. After food is digested, carbohydrates in the food are broken down into glucose which then enters the blood stream. Insulin enables the body to use this glucose for energy.

There are three main types of diabetes.

Type 1 diabetes

Type 1 diabetes occurs when the immune system damages the pancreas and it no longer produces insulin. Usually the onset of type 1 diabetes is abrupt and the symptoms are obvious.

Symptoms can include excessive thirst and urination, unexplained weight loss, weakness and fatigue, irritability, muscle cramps, blurred vision, skin infections and slow wound healing, and in some cases tingling or numbness in the feet.

Type 1 diabetes represents 10-15 per cent of all cases of diabetes and is one of the most common chronic childhood diseases in developed nations.

Type 2 diabetes

Type 2 diabetes occurs when the pancreas is not producing enough insulin or the insulin is not working effectively. It represents 85-90 per cent of all cases of diabetes.

Type 2 diabetes usually develops in adults over the age of 45 years, but it is increasingly occurring at a younger age. It is more likely in people with a family history of type 2 diabetes or who are from particular ethnic backgrounds.

The symptoms are similar to those for type 1 diabetes, but some people with type 2 diabetes do not have any symptoms at all. For others the first indication may be a complication of diabetes such as a heart attack, vision problems, or a foot ulcer.

Gestational diabetes

Gestational diabetes is a form of diabetes that occurs in around five per cent of pregnancies. In the majority of women it disappears after the birth. Gestational diabetes significantly increases a woman's risk of developing type 2 diabetes later in life.

For more information call
1300 136 588



Diabetes
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turning diabetes around