



Minimise your risk of type 2 diabetes

Diabetes Week takes place 13 to 19 June to raise awareness about the condition and to help raise money to support further research.

Diabetes is on the increase in the UK like never before, with Diabetes UK estimating that one in ten adults (5.5 million) will suffer from the condition by 2030 if nothing is done. Furthermore, nearly a million people have diabetes without even knowing it and 13.6 million are at increased risk of type 2 diabetes.

Type 2 diabetes

Type 2 diabetes occurs when either the body's tissues become resistant to insulin or the pancreas doesn't produce enough insulin to properly control blood sugar levels - or usually a combination of the two.

Type 2 diabetes typically affects people over the age of 40, although it is becoming more common in young adults, teens and even children as a result of obesity, sedentary lifestyles and poor diet.

Type 1 diabetes is much rarer than type 2 diabetes. This form of the condition is usually found in children and adults alike, and requires regular injections to help manage the condition.

Symptoms of type 2 diabetes

Type 2 diabetes has many symptoms which tend to develop gradually over time - meaning it can take a while for them to become recognisable. Here are some key things to look out for:

- **Tiredness** over the course of the day, especially after you've eaten
- **Feeling hungry** shortly after eating
- **Urinating** more often than normal, especially during the night
- Excessive **thirst**
- Sudden **weight loss** for no obvious reason

It's important to note that these symptoms can occur for other reasons unrelated to diabetes, but if you are experiencing a collection of them it is worth visiting your GP to get checked.

Minimise your risk

Our lifestyle has a significant impact on our risk of developing type 2 diabetes. In fact, research shows that making healthy lifestyle changes even after a diagnosis can help to put [diabetes into remission](#).

- **Maintain a healthy weight** - keep your BMI under 25.0 (or 23.0 if you're of South Asian or Chinese descent) and your waist girth less than half your height
- **Keep physically active** - at least 150 moderate minutes or 75 vigorous minutes a week - or a combination of both
- **Follow a healthy diet** - high in whole grains, fruits and vegetables and low in sugars and unhealthy fats
- **Keep your alcohol intake in check** - within 14 units per week, spread evenly across the week to avoid heavy drinking episodes
- **Avoid smoking** - if you smoke then stopping should be one of your top health priorities and if you don't then make sure you do all you can to minimise your exposure to second-hand smoke.^{[1][2]}

The NHS Health Check

If you're aged 40 to 74 then you could give your GP surgery a call to see if you're eligible for the [NHS Health Check](#) - a free health screen focussing on diabetes, heart disease, stroke and dementia. For further support on diabetes visit [Diabetes UK](#).