

Living with Diabetes

Diabetes is a common and currently incurable disease in which too much glucose (sugar) is present in the blood.

It occurs when the body can't use glucose properly, either because there is a lack of insulin, or because the insulin available doesn't work the right way. Diabetes causes the sugar to build up in your blood.

There are two main types of diabetes. Type 1, which normally starts in childhood or young adulthood, occurs when the body is unable to produce any insulin.

In type 2, not enough insulin is produced, or the insulin doesn't work properly. This normally affects people as they get older.









If diabetes is not properly controlled, and blood sugar levels remain too high, it can cause serious damage to the eyes, blood vessels, nerves and kidneys, and eventually death.

Food and your blood sugar level

If you have diabetes you should aim to keep the level of sugar in your blood as close to normal as possible—not too high (called hyperglycemia) or too low (called hypoglycemia). By eating the right foods you can help control your blood sugar level, because every time you eat, you put sugar in your blood.

It's important for you to learn how different foods can affect your blood sugar level. If you have diabetes it is important to follow a healthy diet, with regular meals spread throughout the day. If you stay active and choose healthy foods, you can help manage your blood glucose levels and your weight.

8 steps to a Healthy Lifestyle

-  Limit high sugar choices.
-  Don't make your meals too large.
-  Eat at the same time every day to keep sugar levels steady.
-  Try to eat 3 times a day. Have a snack at bedtime if you're taking medicine or insulin.
-  Choose foods that are lower in fat, particularly saturated fat.
-  Include high fiber carbohydrate foods, such as beans, lentils, vegetables, fruit and wholegrain breads and cereals.
-  Eat fewer "empty calories" such as foods high in sugar.
-  If you are overweight, try to lose weight as this can lower your blood sugar levels.

