



# Fact Sheet

## DIABETES

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### Do you have diabetes?

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Are you overweight?

Are there people in your family who have diabetes?

Are you over 45 years old?

Are you Maori, or from the Pacific Islands, Asia, or the Indian sub-continent?

Are you a woman who had diabetes when you were pregnant or had a baby weighing more than 4500gms (9.9lbs)?

If you answer yes to any two of these questions talk to your doctor about getting checked with a simple blood test.

### What is diabetes?

Diabetes is a condition where there is too much glucose (sugar) in the blood.

Glucose usually stays between 3.5 and 8 mmol/l, and this is kept normal with a hormone called insulin, which is made in the pancreas.

High glucose levels can affect many parts of the body. They can lead to eye, nerve, and kidney diseases, and people with diabetes are more likely to develop other health problems including high blood pressure and heart disease.

### How would I know if I have diabetes?

You can't rely on the presence of symptoms to know if you have diabetes.

Symptoms of diabetes include thirst, going to the toilet all the time, tiredness, increased number of infections and weight loss but these symptoms will not appear until your blood sugar is over 15mmol/l.

While some people may have symptoms others may go nearly ten years without symptoms while the extra sugar is doing damage to the body.

Diabetes is diagnosed when the level of the glucose in the blood is greater than 7.0mmol/l (fasting) or 11.1mmol/l (non fasting).

### Are there different types of diabetes?

There are two main types of diabetes

#### Type 2 diabetes

Most people with diabetes have Type 2 diabetes.

It usually occurs in people over 30, but is becoming more common in younger people.

Type 2 diabetes is known to be a lifestyle-related condition, can "run in families" and can be prevented.

It occurs because the insulin made

by the body does not work properly.

Type 2 diabetes usually develops slowly.

Treatment involves healthy eating, physical activity, and in some cases tablets.

Sometimes insulin injections may be needed.

#### Type 1 diabetes.

Ten percent of people with diabetes have Type 1 diabetes.

It occurs when the body does not produce enough insulin.

It develops rapidly in young people, but this type of diabetes also occurs in older people but develops more slowly.

It is always treated with insulin injections and requires careful balancing of food and exercise.

Type 1 is less likely to run in families than Type 2.

See your family doctor or practice nurse

If you think you may have diabetes.

Its better to know if you have diabetes, then you can do something about it.

