



HEALTH INFORMATION

Diabetes Awareness

What is Diabetes?

Diabetes is a common lifelong health condition. There are 2.8 million people diagnosed with diabetes in the UK and an estimated 850,000 people who have the condition but don't know it.

Diabetes is a condition where the amount of glucose in your blood is too high because the body cannot use it properly. This is because your pancreas does not produce any insulin, or not enough, to help glucose enter your body's cells or the insulin that is produced does not work properly (known as insulin resistance).

Insulin is the hormone produced by the pancreas that allows glucose to enter the body's cells, where it is used as fuel for energy so we can work, play and generally live our lives. It is vital for life.

Glucose comes from digesting carbohydrate and is also produced by the liver. Carbohydrate comes from many different kinds of foods and drink, including starchy foods such as bread, potatoes and chapatis; fruit; some dairy products; sugar and other sweet foods.

If you have diabetes, your body cannot make proper use of this glucose so it builds up in the blood and isn't able to be used as fuel.

Type 1 diabetes

Type 1 diabetes is when no insulin is produced at all because the insulin producing cells in the pancreas have been destroyed. Nobody knows for sure why these cells have been damaged but the most likely cause is the body having an abnormal reaction to the cells. There is nothing that you can do to prevent Type 1 diabetes. This type of diabetes is always treated with insulin injections.

Type 2 diabetes

Type 2 diabetes is when the body either does not produce enough insulin, or the insulin it produces does not work as well as it should (insulin resistance). This type of diabetes is treated with lifestyle changes, following a healthy balanced diet, increasing physical activity, and losing weight if you need to. Some people may need medication and insulin injections to achieve normal blood glucose levels.

The main symptoms of undiagnosed diabetes can include

- passing urine more often than usual, especially at night
- increased thirst
- extreme tiredness
- unexplained weight loss
- genital itching or regular episodes of thrush
- slow healing of cuts and wounds
- blurred vision

For more information



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