

Are YOU at risk?

Too many people develop life-threatening complications because their diabetes is diagnosed **too late**.

Find out if you are at risk...

There are many misconceptions about diabetes being a 'mild' condition. But these misconceptions are potentially dangerous. Diabetes *is* serious – read on and make sure you know if you are at risk.

Diabetes occurs when the body can't use glucose (sugar) properly. As a result, people with diabetes have abnormally high levels of glucose in their blood.

There are two types of diabetes. Type 1 diabetes usually affects people under 40 and is treated with insulin. Type 2 diabetes is usually found in people aged 40 or more and can be treated with diet and exercise alone, although it can often require tablets and sometimes, insulin.

Diabetes – the complications

What makes diabetes so serious is that the condition can affect other parts of the body. Many adults have had diabetes for several years before their symptoms are recognised. By the time they are diagnosed, a great many have already started to develop the complications of diabetes – **blindness, kidney failure, heart disease, stroke and nerve damage that could lead to amputations.**

If you think you might have diabetes, it is vital you take steps now.

Spotting diabetes early means that it can be treated and the risk of developing the serious complications can be greatly reduced.

A simple blood test will see if you have diabetes – ask your GP for one.





Diabetes – the risk factors

• Diabetes and age

Most people with diabetes have Type 2 diabetes. The older you are, the greater your risk of diabetes.

• Diabetes runs in families

The closer the relative with diabetes, the greater your risk of diabetes. African-Caribbean or South Asian people are three to five times more likely to have diabetes than white members of the population.

• Weight is a factor in diabetes

Over 80 per cent of people with Type 2 diabetes are overweight. The more overweight and unfit you are, the greater your risk of diabetes.

• Diabetes and pregnancy

Pregnant women can develop a temporary type of diabetes called 'gestational diabetes'. Having this, or giving birth to a large baby, can increase a woman's risk of going on to develop Type 2 diabetes.

Diabetes – the symptoms

- increased thirst
- going to the loo all the time – especially at night
- extreme tiredness
- weight loss
- genital itching or regular episodes of thrush
- blurred vision.

In Type 2 diabetes, the symptoms may not always be easily recognised.

What diabetes care to expect if you are diagnosed

Being diagnosed can be scary, but you can **live a normal, unrestricted life** – just look at Olympic rower, Sir Steve Redgrave.


If you are diagnosed, Diabetes UK recommends that you should have **access to a diabetes care team** made up of a range of healthcare professionals. One of the first things they should arrange is a full medical examination.

They should then work with you to **devise a programme of care that suits you**. You should get to meet a diabetes specialist nurse or a GP practice nurse who will tell you about diabetes and explain the treatment. You should also meet a state registered dietitian.

You may have concerns about how diabetes could affect other aspects of your life such as your job, and you should be given the chance to talk about this. You should also **be given regular information** on diabetes and about Diabetes UK and our services.

Remember, you can lead a full and healthy life with diabetes.

For more information about diabetes, fill out the attached slip for our information pack. If you become a member of Diabetes UK you will receive regular information on diabetes care, research and campaigns. You will find **details on how to become a member** in the information pack.



What Diabetes UK can do for you

- **Diabetes UK Careline** offers a confidential telephone service giving diabetes information and support for anyone who needs it. Diabetes UK Careline also has an interpretation service for people whose first language is not English.
- **Publications** produced by Diabetes UK offer a wide range of information on everything from diabetes treatments to how to live a full and healthy life. Some of these are free.
- **Balance** our bi-monthly magazine packed with news and information is available free to members.
- **Diabetes UK website** has all the latest information and news on diabetes and Diabetes UK: www.diabetes.org.uk
- **Diabetes UK Services** include insurance and financial products that are designed to meet the needs of people with diabetes.
- **Diabetes UK voluntary groups** across the country offer support and the chance to meet other local people with diabetes.
To find out how to become a member of Diabetes UK, fill in the attached slip to send for our information pack or ring **020 7323 1531** and ask for Customer Services.

For any questions on diabetes, please contact our **Diabetes UK Careline**
Tel 0845 120 2960 (operates an interpretation service)

Textphone 020 7424 1031
Email careline@diabetes.org.uk

How to contact Diabetes UK

Diabetes UK, Central Office
London: 020 7424 1000

Diabetes UK North West
Warrington: 01925 653281

Diabetes UK West Midlands
Walsall: 01922 614500

Diabetes UK Northern & Yorkshire
Darlington: 01325 488606

Diabetes UK Northern Ireland
Belfast: 028 9066 6646

Diabetes UK Scotland
Glasgow: 0141 332 2700

Diabetes UK Cymru
Cardiff: 029 2066 8276

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The charity for people with diabetes
10 Parkway, London NW1 7AA
Registered charity no. 215199



Diabetes UK (the new name of the British Diabetic Association) is the leading charity working for people with diabetes.

Over 1.4 million people in the UK have diabetes and another million probably have the condition but don't know it. Our mission is to improve the lives of people with diabetes and to work towards a future without diabetes.

Diabetes UK exists to champion the rights of people with diabetes so that they get the support and standards of care they deserve. We provide support and information to people with diabetes through our Diabetes UK Careline, a telephone support service, and the books and leaflets we produce, some of which are free. Diabetes UK is also the largest funder in the UK of vital research into better treatments for diabetes and into the search for a cure.

We rely on donations to continue our work for people with diabetes. Please help by making a contribution. Just complete the details overleaf and return this slip with your cheque or postal order.

Thank you

Diabetes UK mission: To improve the lives of people with diabetes and to work towards a future without diabetes.

For a free information pack, simply complete and detach this slip, sending it to: **Diabetes UK, Freepost LON 20209, PO Box 400, Swindon, Wiltshire SN2 8LA**

Title _____ First name _____

Last name _____

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Date of birth _____

Please tick the relevant box(es):

Please send me a Diabetes UK information pack on diabetes

I would like to make a donation to Diabetes UK of £ .00

Please make your cheque or postal order payable to **Diabetes UK**

We promise we will not pass on your details to other charities. We will only record details of your contact and support to Diabetes UK for the purposes of sending you further information about our work and that of our trading company.

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