

Type 2 diabetes: What to do if you're at risk

TYPE 2 DIABETES
KNOW YOUR
RISK

What's included in this pack?

- What being at risk of Type 2 diabetes means
- How you can reduce your risk of Type 2 diabetes
- Your action plan
- What is diabetes?

Being at risk of Type 2 diabetes

This pack is designed for people at risk of developing Type 2 diabetes.

We'll talk you through:

- 1** **What being at risk means**
Understand more about why you're at risk of Type 2 diabetes.
- 2** **How to make changes to reduce your risk**
We'll give you advice about eating better, moving more and keeping to a healthy weight to help reduce your risk.
- 3** **How to get more help**
Make the most of local support and services in your area.

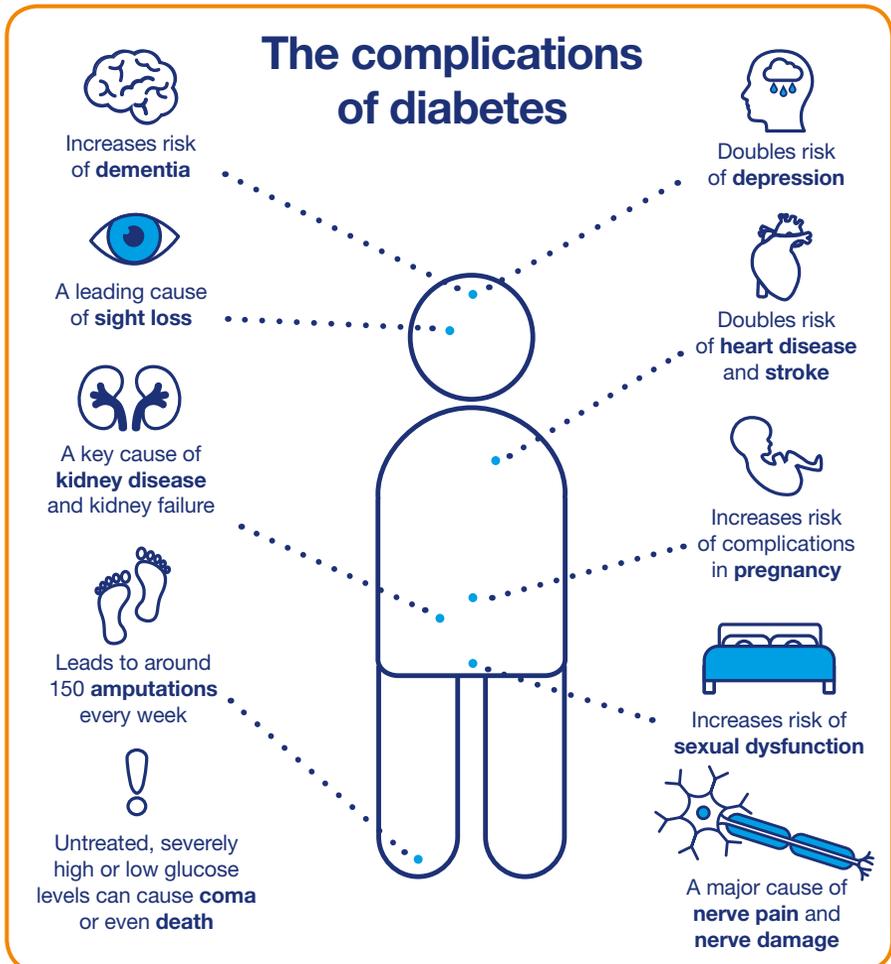
If you'd like to talk to someone about your risk of Type 2 diabetes and how to reduce it, please call the Diabetes UK Helpline 9am–7pm, Monday–Friday on **0345 123 2399*** or email **helpline@diabetes.org.uk**

Type 2 diabetes is serious

Diabetes can lead to serious complications which can affect many different parts of your body.

In the worst cases, diabetes can kill you. Each week diabetes causes thousands of complications like stroke, amputation, kidney failure, heart attack and heart failure.

But by taking action now you can lower your risk of getting Type 2 diabetes and suffering these complications.



Your risk

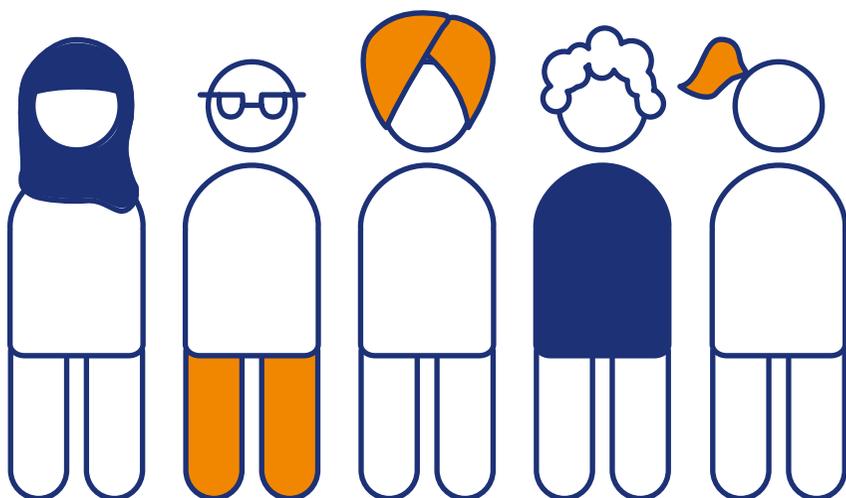
Your risk

What does being at risk of Type 2 diabetes mean?

Being told you are at risk of Type 2 diabetes can be confusing.

The reasons people are at risk can be different and some people are more at risk than others. But, there are things everyone can do to make sure their risk of Type 2 diabetes is as low as possible.

The next few pages will explain why you might be at risk and what this means for you.



What a blood test can tell you about your risk

If you've seen your GP or nurse recently and they were worried about your risk of Type 2 diabetes, you may have had a blood test.

There are several different types of blood tests. These all check the level of sugar (or glucose) in your blood and are sometimes known as a blood sugar or blood glucose test. The results will tell you if you have Type 2 diabetes or not.

Higher than normal blood sugar levels

In some people, blood sugar levels may be higher than normal, but not high enough to be diagnosed as Type 2 diabetes. Your doctor or nurse will tell you if this is the case.

Having high blood sugar levels means you are at more risk of getting Type 2 diabetes. But knowing this is important. It means you can now do something about it and keep your risk as low as possible.

Did you know?

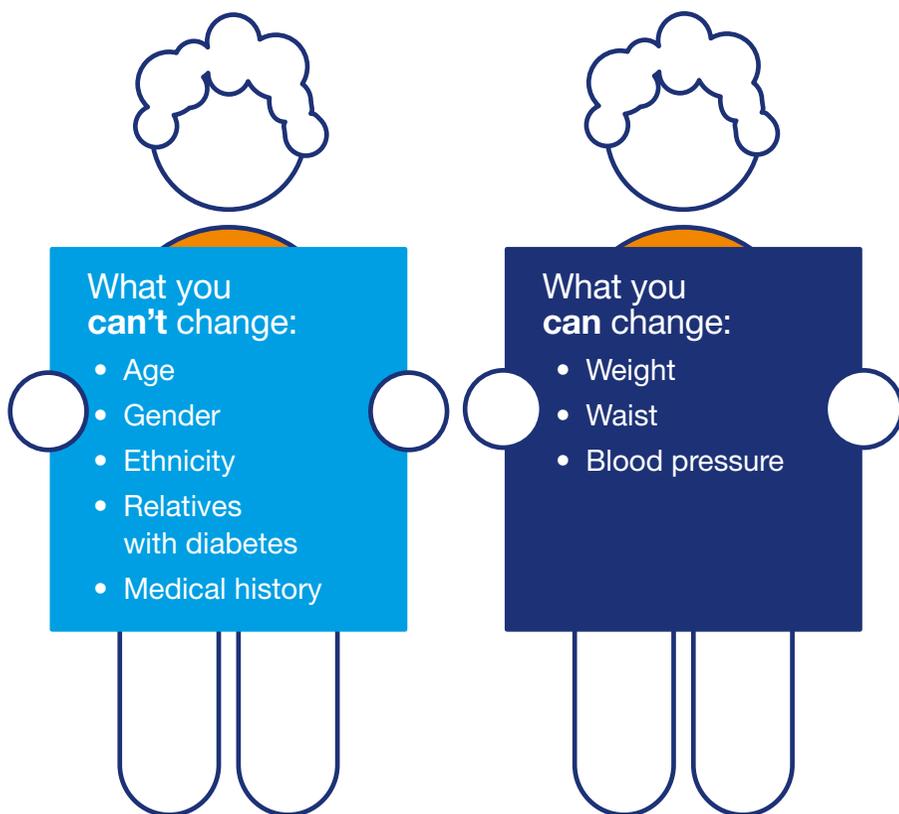
Doctors may use terms such as prediabetes, borderline diabetes, impaired glucose regulation or non-diabetic hyperglycaemia to describe how serious it is to have higher than normal blood sugar levels.

This can be confusing. It does not mean you have Type 2 diabetes. All these terms mean the same thing – that you're more at risk of getting it in the future.

What makes me at risk?

There are several different reasons why some people are at more risk of Type 2 diabetes than others.

Take a look at the reasons below and have a think about what might be putting you at risk. There are some things you can change and others you can't.



If you haven't seen your GP and aren't sure about your level of risk you can use our Know Your Risk online tool:

www.diabetes.org.uk/risk

Risk explained

What you **can't** change

Age

If you are over the age of 40 and from a White background your risk is increased. However if you are from an African-Caribbean, Black African or South Asian background your risk increases from the age of 25.

Gender

Men are slightly more likely to get Type 2 diabetes than women.

Ethnicity

If you're of African-Caribbean, Black African or South Asian origin you're more at risk than people from a White background.

Close relatives with diabetes

The chances of you getting Type 2 diabetes are increased if a parent, brother or sister, or child has diabetes.

What you **can** change

Your waist

Carrying weight around your middle can make it harder for your body to control the levels of sugar in the blood.

Your weight

Being overweight also makes it harder for your body to control the levels of sugar in your blood.

Blood pressure

Having high blood pressure is often linked to being overweight.

All of these increase your risk of getting Type 2 diabetes.

What to ask your doctor or nurse

Once you know you're at risk of Type 2 diabetes, you may have a lot of questions.

Your GP and nurse can help you make the changes you need to reduce your risk of Type 2 diabetes.

It's important to make an appointment with them – here are some questions you might want to ask.

More help

- Is there a diabetes prevention programme or weight management group I can go to in my local area?
- Are there any local services to help me move more?
- Are there any local services to help me eat better?

Blood tests

- Do I need a blood test to check my risk?
- When will I get my results?
- What is the number and what does it mean?

What next?

- What do I need to do now?
- When do I need to come back and see you?
- Do I need more blood tests in the future?

Reduce your risk of Type 2 diabetes

First steps to lowering your risk

However you've found out you're at risk – and knowing is a big first step – the important thing to do now is take action to lower your risk.

Evidence shows the best way to reduce your risk of Type 2 diabetes is by:

- eating better
- moving more
- reducing your weight if you're overweight.

Here are some questions to ask yourself

- What healthy changes can I make to eat better?
- How can I move more every day?
- Am I a healthy weight? Do I need to lose weight? If so, how can I lose weight?

Over the next few pages, we've put together our top tips for:

- keeping to a healthy weight
- snack swaps
- food shopping
- your kitchen cupboard
- portion sizes
- moving more.

Even making a small change today can make a big difference to your future health.

For more top tips:

www.diabetes.org.uk/knowyourrisk

Keeping to a healthy weight

You may need to lose weight or reduce your waist to lower your risk of Type 2 diabetes.

How do I know if I need to lose weight?

Finding out your waist measurement and body mass index (BMI) is the first step.

Waist

You may need to work towards getting your waist measurement to:

- 80cm/31.5 inches if you're a woman
- 94cm/37 inches if you're a man
- 90cm/35 inches if you're a South Asian man.

Your waist isn't your trouser size. Find out how to get the right measurement for your waist at:

www.diabetes.org.uk/waist-measurement

BMI

BMI is a measure that uses your height and weight to work out if your weight is healthy.

If your BMI is over 25, you're more at risk of Type 2 diabetes.

To work out your BMI visit:

www.nhs.uk/tools/pages/healthyweightcalculator.aspx

Read on for some tips to help you get to and keep to a healthy weight.

What's the right diet for you?

There are many different ways to lose weight but there's no one-size-fits-all approach.

The key is to find what works for you, fits in with your lifestyle and you enjoy.

Make small and realistic changes which you can keep to.

So what next?

1 Set clear goals

Use the action plan (page 24) and keep a food and activity diary to keep you on track.

2 Plan ahead

It's helpful to plan meals for the week ahead especially when we all lead busy lives. This can help you eat better and stick to a budget.

3 Start to make healthy changes

Use the tips on the following pages to make small and lasting changes.

4 Be creative

Try simple, healthy new recipes and new food. You can find lots of ideas at www.diabetes.org.uk/recipes

5 Sleep well

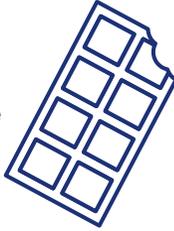
Get a good night's sleep. Research has shown that if you are tired you feel hungrier and are more likely to want fatty and sugary foods.

Snack swaps

Swapping is an easy way to eat better while still enjoying the foods you like. Here's a few to try to get you started.

Sweet

Instead of
milk chocolate



try
dark chocolate
rice cakes



Instead of
ice cream



try
frozen banana
or frozen low-fat
yogurt



Savoury

Instead of
crisps



try
plain popcorn
with added spices
or cinnamon



Instead of
bread and dips



try
carrots and celery
with salsa or low-fat
hummus



Drinks

Instead of
fizzy sugary drinks



try
water flavoured
with mint or
fresh fruit



Food shopping

Keep these dos and don'ts in mind when food shopping for quick wins that can make a big difference.

Before you go, make a list of what you need. Stick to it.

Shop for seasonal fruit and vegetables, which are tasty and cheaper.

Stock up on beans and pulses – they're excellent for making meals go further and keeping you full for longer.

Don't shop for food when you're hungry – you may buy more than you need.

Avoid buy-one-get-one-free offers as they're usually on unhealthy foods. Do you really need to buy the extra?

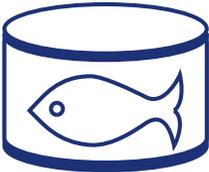
Canned, dried and frozen fruit and veg all count towards your five a day. These can be cheaper than buying fresh and will help you make sure you always have healthy options on hand.

Don't buy too many fruit juices and smoothies. Eat the whole fruit instead to get the goodness from the fibre.



Your kitchen cupboard

Keep your kitchen cupboard stocked with these essentials so you always have the ingredients to whip up a quick and tasty meal.



Tinned fish

Transform a tin of salmon or tuna into a super salad by mixing with a can of beans, chopped onion, peppers, tomatoes and cucumber.



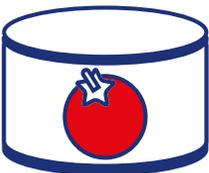
Tinned chickpeas

Simply roast and add to a salad or make a quick curry by cooking chickpeas together with chopped onion, some curry paste, a couple of tomatoes and a splash of yogurt.



Rice

For something different, why not try lemon rice as part of your next meal? Add dried chilli, turmeric and lemon juice when the rice is cooking. Choose high fibre brown rice whenever you can.



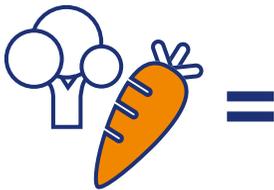
Tinned tomatoes

For a basic tomato sauce, mix a tin of tomatoes add a heaped tsp of dried oregano, a crushed garlic clove and a pinch of chilli flakes. Then cook with chopped onion, peppers, courgettes or mushrooms and toss through pasta.

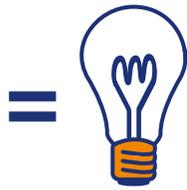
Portion sizes

Use these everyday items as a guide to help you get an idea of what one portion looks like. Ask your GP if you can see a dietitian so you can find out how many portions of each food group is right for you.

Fruit and veg

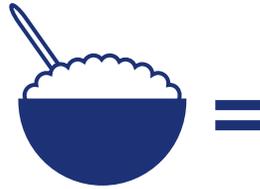


Cooked veg

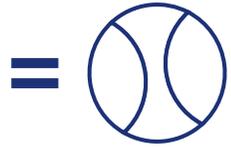


Lightbulb

Starchy foods

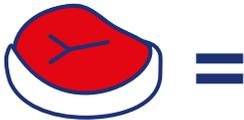


Cooked rice



Tennis ball

Meat, fish and pulses

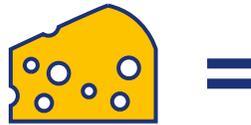


Lean meat,
oily fish
or chicken



Deck
of cards

Dairy products



Cheese

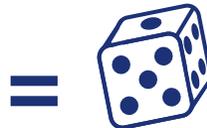


Small
matchbox

Foods high in fat and sugar



Butter



Dice

Move more

We should all be sitting less and moving more.

Why?

Moving more every day will help you maintain a healthy weight. It can also:

- help you sleep
- manage your stress levels
- improve your mood.

And remember, doing just a little bit more than you did before is a great start. Then keep increasing the intensity or the amount you're doing.

How much activity should you do?

Minutes per day (at least five days a week)

30

or

15

moderate intensity
(increased breathing,
able to talk)

vigorous intensity
(breathing fast,
difficulty talking)

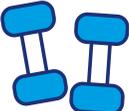
or a combination of both

Plus

activities that improve your muscle strength on two or more days a week.

Get up and move

What can you do?

| Get active | | Improve muscle strength |
|---|--|---|
| Moderate* | Vigorous** | |
|  Walk |  Run |  Heavy gardening |
|  Cycle |  Sport |  Carrying groceries |
|  Swim |  Fitness class |  Yoga |

*Moderate exercise means walking quickly, cycling on flat ground or a leisurely swim.

**Vigorous exercise means running, cycling fast or up hills, or fast swimming.

How can you move more?

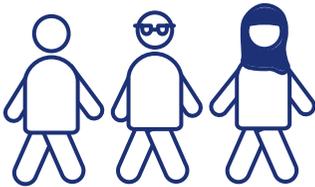
For a simple way to move more, start walking more than normal.



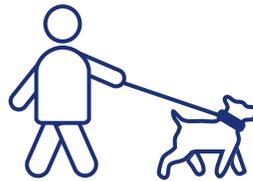
Get off the bus
a stop earlier



Take the stairs instead
of the escalator or lift



Have a walking meeting
or catch up with friends



Do an extra five
minutes when walking
the dog



Walk to the shops to
pick up a few items



Use a pedometer to
keep track of your steps
– aim for 10,000 a day

My action plan

My action plan

An action plan is a great way to set healthy goals and stick to them.

Think about **what** you want to do to eat better and move more, **why** it's important to you and **how** you will achieve your goals.

Eat better

My personal goal is: _____

When will I reach my goal: _____

How will I reach my goal:

Week 1 _____

Week 2 _____

Week 3 _____

Week 4 _____



Move more

My personal goal is: _____

When will I reach my goal: _____

How will I reach my goal:

Week 1 _____

Week 2 _____

Week 3 _____

Week 4 _____

What is diabetes?

What is diabetes?

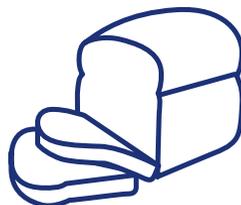
Diabetes is a serious lifelong health condition.

When you have diabetes, your body either doesn't produce insulin at all, doesn't produce enough insulin or the insulin produced doesn't work very well.

Insulin's job is to move glucose from our blood into our cells where it is used for energy.

We get glucose when our body breaks down foods which contain carbohydrates such as bread, cereals, fruit and veg and some dairy products. This glucose enters the blood stream and it is insulin that allows us to use this for energy.

Without insulin doing its job, people with diabetes end up with high levels of glucose in their blood. If not treated properly it can affect almost every part of their body and lead to serious health problems like blindness, amputation, stroke and heart attacks.



There are two main types of diabetes, Type 1 and Type 2

With **Type 1** diabetes, the body doesn't produce any insulin at all. You cannot prevent Type 1 diabetes. It just happens.

With **Type 2** diabetes the body doesn't make enough insulin, or the insulin it makes doesn't work properly. It is possible to delay or avoid Type 2 diabetes.

They are both serious and need to be treated and managed properly.

Of the people in the UK who have diabetes:

- about **10%** have **Type 1** diabetes
- about **90%** have **Type 2** diabetes.

Did you know?

You can also have diabetes during pregnancy, known as gestational diabetes, which can increase your risk of Type 2 diabetes in the future.

For more info on diabetes and the different types go to www.diabetes.org.uk/guide-to-diabetes

What are the signs of Type 2 diabetes?

Because you are at risk of Type 2 diabetes, it's important to be aware of the signs.

These signs can appear over time, so it may be difficult to notice them at first.

- Go to the toilet often, especially at night
- Often feel thirsty
- Often feel very tired
- Get blurred eyesight
- Often feel itchy around the genitals, or often get infections like thrush
- Have a cut that's taken a long time to heal
- Lose weight without trying to

If you've ticked any of these signs, don't ignore them.

See your doctor or nurse as soon as possible and ask to be tested for diabetes.

If you do have diabetes, you and your doctor or nurse can then work out a plan of how to treat and manage it properly.

The sooner you visit your doctor or nurse, the sooner you can get the right care and treatment to prevent you getting serious complications.

We hope this pack has told you more about your risk of Type 2 diabetes and how you can reduce it.

We'd love to stay in touch, so let us know what changes you've made:

knowyourrisk@diabetes.org.uk

 **@DiabetesUK**

 **/diabetesuk**

If you have any questions or concerns about diabetes or being at risk, call the Diabetes UK Helpline 9am–7pm, Monday–Friday on **0345 123 2399*** or email **helpline@diabetes.org.uk**

*Calls may be recorded for quality and training purposes.

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www.diabetes.org.uk/knowyourrisk



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