

# Type 2 diabetes in adults: management

Information for the public

Published: 2 December 2015

Last updated: 31 March 2022

[www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk)

## Type 2 diabetes: the care you should expect

Type 2 diabetes causes people to have too much sugar (glucose) in their blood. It happens when the body cannot use a hormone called insulin as well as it should.

Type 2 diabetes puts people at risk of long-term problems with their eyes, feet, heart, kidneys, liver and nerves. It is a lifelong condition that can affect everyday life, though remission is possible. People with type 2 diabetes:

- may need to change their diet and make other lifestyle changes
- usually need to take medicines to control their blood sugar
- will need to get regular checkups.

We want this guideline to make a difference to people with type 2 diabetes by making sure:

- they get personalised advice on healthy eating from experts (such as dietitians)
- healthcare professionals involve them in agreeing an average blood sugar target (called a HbA1c level) – the target is normally 48 mmol/mol (or 6.5%), but for some people a different target can be better
- their care team discuss the different diabetes medicines with them, so they can jointly agree which to take (most people will need to take more than one medicine)
- the medicines they take support their overall health, taking into account their diabetes as well as any other disease they may have or be at high risk of getting (such as cardiovascular disease or kidney disease)
- people who are taking insulin can get a continuous monitoring system if it would help them manage their diabetes – for example, if they are having lots of hypos, or their hypos are severe (a hypo is when blood sugar is too low, and it can cause dizziness and fainting)
- they are encouraged to see a dentist regularly, to get checked for gum disease.

## Making decisions together

Decisions about treatment and care are best when they are made together. Your health and care professionals should give you clear information, talk with you about your options and listen carefully to your views and concerns.

To help you make decisions, think about:

- What matters most to you – what do you want to get out of any treatment or care?
- What are you most worried about – are there risks or downsides to treatment that worry you more than others?
- How will treatment affect your day-to-day life?
- What happens if you don't want to have treatment or a specific type of treatment?

If you need more support to understand the information you are given, tell your healthcare professional.

Read more about [making decisions about your care](#).

## Where can I find out more?

There is more [information about type 2 diabetes on the NHS website](#).

The organisations below can give you more advice and support.

- [Diabetes UK](#), 0345 123 2399
- [Diabetes Research and Wellness Foundation](#), 02392 637 808
- [Weight Concern](#)

You can also find information about people's experience of type 2 diabetes on [healthtalk](#).

To share an experience of care you have received, contact your local [Healthwatch](#).

NICE is not responsible for the content of these websites.

Read more about [making decisions about your care](#).

You may also like to read [NICE's information for the public on patient experience in adult NHS services](#). This sets out what adults should be able to expect when they use the NHS. We also have more information on the NICE website about using health and social care services.

ISBN: 978-1-4731-7877-9