

A Fact Sheet for Parents and Carers

What is type 1 diabetes?

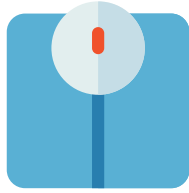
Type 1 diabetes occurs when the pancreas is no longer able to make insulin. Insulin is a hormone that acts like a key to let glucose from the food we eat, pass from the blood stream into the muscle cells to provide energy. This causes blood glucose levels to rise. Type 1 diabetes is usually diagnosed during childhood or young adulthood but can occur at any age.

Symptoms

The symptoms of type 1 diabetes can develop quickly in children and need urgent medical attention!



Being very thirsty



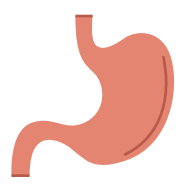
Losing weight



Passing lots of urine



Being very tired



Having stomach pain

Cause of Type 1 Diabetes

Some people carry genes which may make them more likely to get type 1 diabetes. However, it only develops in these people when something triggers the immune system to destroy the insulin-producing cells in the pancreas. These triggers are thought to be factors in the environment but as yet are not well understood.





Management of Type 1 Diabetes

- Provide insulin by injection or an insulin pump - every day for life
- Test blood glucose levels several times a day
- Follow a healthy eating plan that includes eating regular meals that contain carbohydrate foods
- Be physically active on a regular basis
- Have regular medical check-ups with the diabetes team, that may include several or all of the following: Diabetes specialist doctor, diabetes educator, dietitian, social worker, psychologist.

**For more information contact
Diabetes NSW & ACT on 1300 342 238 or visit as1diabetes.com.au**

What is hyperglycaemia and hypoglycaemia?

In type 1 diabetes, blood glucose levels can fluctuate, going up and down due to a variety of factors. Managing blood glucose levels between target ranges can be a balancing act. Knowing what affects blood glucose levels can help manage levels.

HYPERGLYCAEMIA

Hyperglycaemia is a blood glucose level that is high, generally above 15mmol/L. High blood glucose levels can be caused by a variety of factors, including:

- Extra food or more carbohydrate food
- Limited activity
- Stress or illness
- Missing or skipping insulin

Your diabetes team will help you understand how these factors affect blood glucose levels and what you can do when hyperglycaemia occurs.

HYPOGLYCAEMIA

Hypoglycaemia, or hypo, is a low blood glucose level, generally below 4mmol/L. Hypos can be dangerous, so it's important to treat a hypo straight away. See the Hypoglycaemia resource for detailed information about managing and treating hypoglycaemia.

HYPOS MAY BE CAUSED BY:

- Delayed or skipped meal or snack
- Not enough carbohydrate food
- Unplanned physical activity or more activity than usual
- Physical activity
- Too much insulin

Your diabetes team will help you understand how these factors affect blood glucose levels and how to prevent or manage hypos when they occur.

Need an interpreter?

A free telephone interpreter service is available for people who may have difficulty in understanding or speaking English. The Telephone Interpreting Service (TIS) is provided by the government and has access to professional interpreters in almost 2000 languages and dialects and can respond immediately to most requests.

Accessing an interpreter:

1. Simply dial 131 450 for the Telephone Interpreting Service.
2. Explain the purpose for the call e.g. wanting to speak to the National Diabetes Services Scheme helpline
3. The operator will connect you to an interpreter in the required language to an NDSS helpline representative for a three-way conversation.

This free service has been set up by Diabetes Australia and will be promoted with assistance from the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing.