

AMIAN HEALTH & WELLBEING

JUNE 2017

- **NATIONAL DIABETES WEEK 12th – 18th JUNE**

Diabetes Week kicks off on 12th June, and this year the theme is:

Know Diabetes. Fight Diabetes.

While a lot of people have a good understanding of diabetes and how to manage it, many others aren't getting the right help and support to look after their diabetes.

Today, 65 people will die early from the condition and hundreds more will face life-changing complications that could have been avoided or delayed if they'd had the right knowledge and support to manage their diabetes. Some of you have that, and are already doing everything you can to manage your diabetes well. But this isn't true for everyone.

WHAT IS TYPE 1 DIABETES?

Type 1 diabetes develops when the insulin-producing cells in the body have been destroyed and the body is unable to produce any insulin.

Who typically gets Type 1 diabetes?



Type 1 diabetes accounts for about 10 per cent of all adults with diabetes and is treated by daily insulin doses – taken either by injections or via an insulin pump. It is also recommended to follow a healthy diet and take regular physical activity. Type 1 diabetes can develop at any age but usually appears before the age of 40, and especially in childhood. It is the most common type of diabetes found in childhood.

WHAT IS TYPE 2 DIABETES?

Type 2 diabetes develops when the insulin-producing cells in the body are unable to produce enough insulin, or when the insulin that is produced does not work properly (known as insulin resistance).

Who typically gets Type 2 diabetes?



Type 2 diabetes usually appears in people over the age of 40, though in South Asian people, who are at greater risk, it often appears from the age of 25. It is also increasingly becoming more common in children, adolescents and young people of all ethnicities. Type 2 diabetes accounts for between 85 and 95 per cent of all people with diabetes and is treated with a healthy diet and increased physical activity.

In addition to this, medication and/or insulin are often required.

In Type 2 diabetes there is not enough insulin (or the insulin isn't working properly), so the cells are only partially unlocked and glucose builds up in the blood.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF DIABETES?

Are you worried that you, your child or someone you know, may have diabetes? Having some of the signs of diabetes doesn't mean you definitely have the condition, but you should always contact your GP, just to make sure.



The common symptoms of diabetes

- Going to the toilet a lot, especially at night.
- Being really thirsty.
- Feeling more tired than usual.
- Losing weight without trying to.
- Genital itching or thrush.
- Cuts and wounds take longer to heal.
- Blurred vision.

Although the majority of people with Type 1 diabetes are diagnosed in childhood and early adulthood, the symptoms are the same at any age. Adults diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes may not recognise their symptoms as quickly as children, which in turn will prove detrimental as diagnosis then treatment may be delayed.

Why does diabetes create these symptoms?

These symptoms occur because some or all of the glucose stays in the blood, and isn't being used as fuel for energy. The body tries to reduce blood glucose levels by flushing the excess glucose out of the body in the urine.

DIABETES MYTHS AND FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Myths

Knowing the facts about diabetes is important when it comes to managing the condition. There is so much information out there, but it is not all true. It is often difficult to know what is right and what is not. This section aims to help dispel some of the most common myths about diabetes – let's have a look at some of them...

Myth: Type 2 diabetes is a mild form of diabetes

There is no such thing as mild diabetes. All diabetes is serious and, if not properly controlled, can lead to serious complications.

Myth: People with diabetes cannot have sugar

Having diabetes does not mean you have to have a sugar-free diet. People with diabetes should follow a healthy balanced diet – that is low in fat, salt and sugar. You should still be able to enjoy a wide variety of foods, including some with sugar.

Myth: People with diabetes should eat 'diabetic' foods

'Diabetic' labelling tends to be used on sweets, biscuits and similar foods that are generally high in fat, especially saturated fat and calories. Diabetes UK does not recommend eating 'diabetic' foods, including diabetic chocolate, because they still affect your blood glucose levels, they are expensive and they can give you diarrhoea. So, if you are going to treat yourself, you should go for the real thing.

Myth: People with diabetes eventually go blind

Although diabetes is the leading cause of blindness in people of working age in the UK, research has proved you can reduce your chances of developing diabetes complications – such as damage to your eyes – if you:

- control your blood pressure, glucose, and blood fat levels
- keep active
- maintain your ideal body weight
- give up smoking.

Myth: It's not safe to drive if you have diabetes

Providing you are responsible and have good control of your diabetes, research shows that people with diabetes are no less safe on the roads than anyone else. Nevertheless, the myth that people with diabetes are not safe persists.

Diabetes UK is working with the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) in England, Scotland and Wales and the Driver and Vehicle Agency (DVA) in Northern Ireland to ensure that the process for applying and reapplying for driving licences is fair, safe and transparent.

Myth: People with diabetes can't play sport

People with diabetes are encouraged to exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle. Keeping active can help reduce the risk of complications associated with diabetes, such as heart disease. Steve Redgrave, Olympic gold medal-winning rower, has achieved great sporting achievements in spite of having diabetes.

However, there may be some considerations to take into account before taking up a new exercise regime. Talk to your GP for more information.

Myth: Having diabetes means you can't do certain jobs

Having diabetes should not stop you from getting and keeping a job. However, despite the Equality Act 2010 (Disability Discrimination Act in Northern Ireland), people with diabetes still face blanket bans in some areas of employment, including the armed forces.

Myth: People with diabetes can't eat grapes, mangoes or bananas

People sometimes think that if they have diabetes they can't eat grapes and bananas as they taste sweet. But if you eat a diet that includes these fruits, you can still achieve good blood glucose control. In fact, grapes and bananas, like all fruit, make a very healthy choice.

Fruit is high in fibre, low in fat and full of vitamins and minerals. It helps to protect against heart disease, cancer and certain stomach problems.

Will I need extra support and where can I get it?

Managing your diabetes can at times seem incredibly demanding and some people find that support and encouragement can be really beneficial in helping them cope. Support should ideally come from someone you have regular contact with, maybe your partner, a friend, or someone from your healthcare team. **Ask your GP about any support groups in your area.**

AMIAN Counselling and support service provides all Bolton University Staff with unbiased, impartial, independent, free advice and support and is a practical and positive way to help resolve concerns and difficulties. Not all staff accessing our service require counselling, some just need the assistance from someone outside of the situation to help explore possible options and provide advice, support and information.

The service is completely confidential and is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The service is available to all employees.

If you have any further questions or wish to book an appointment, please do not hesitate to contact AMIAN:

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