

Diabetes WA is the leading charity and peak consumer body representing people with diabetes in Western Australia and providing vital information and support to the community about diabetes.

Contact Us

www.diabeteswa.com.au

Tel: 1300 136 588

For further information

www.pmh.health.wa.gov.au/services/endocrinology

www.telethonjdfc.org.au

This brochure was originally developed in collaboration with a group of young people with type 1 diabetes in 2006. We thank them for their ideas, humour and inspiration.

Having a hypo doesn't mean you go crazy

During a hypo the brain is not getting enough glucose to keep working normally. This may cause me to act strangely, confused or grumpy, but it is just temporary. I will return to normal once my blood glucose rises again.

I can look after myself

(most of the time)

Having diabetes does not mean that I need any special treatment or care, though if I am having a hypo I might need help getting something to eat, if I can't manage it myself. Most older kids and teenagers test their own blood glucose levels and give their own insulin injections.

I can eat sugar and chocolate (sometimes)

A person with type 1 should eat healthy food just like everyone else. People should eat lots of vegetables, legumes, wholegrain cereals, rice, pasta, fruits, low fat dairy products and lean meat. Like everyone else I can eat foods like chips, ice-cream, chocolate and biscuits sometimes, but maybe not every day.

Type 2 diabetes does not turn into type 1 diabetes

Type 1 diabetes is an auto-immune condition where the body's immune system attacks the insulin producing cells. It can occur at any age 50% of people are under the age of 18 when they develop type 1 diabetes. People with type 2 diabetes often start to use insulin as their condition progresses. This does not mean they have type 1 diabetes.

Please don't ask me

Do injections hurt?

Will your pancreas start working again?

Can you eat chocolate?

Are you allergic to sugar?

Have you still got diabetes?

Is diabetes contagious?

If I give you sugar will you drop dead?

Did you get diabetes because you were fat?

Did you get diabetes from eating too many lollies?

Will it go away?

Should you be eating that?

Can you test my blood sugar?

High

LOW



NDSS
national diabetes services scheme

diabeteswa

The National Diabetes Services Scheme (NDSS) is an initiative of the Australian Government, administered by Diabetes Australia.

Diabetes/daie'bitiz/, n.

Type 1 diabetes (formerly juvenile or insulin-dependent diabetes) occurs when the body's immune system destroys cells in the pancreas that produce insulin. Insulin helps the body to use glucose (or sugar) in the bloodstream for energy. 10-15% of all people with diabetes have type 1. It often begins in childhood or early adulthood but can occur at any age.

I could not have prevented my diabetes

I did not get diabetes because of the foods I've eaten, my weight or because I didn't exercise enough. I got diabetes because I have a certain gene and something in the environment (we don't know what) caused my immune system to attack its own cells.

Diabetes Basics:

I have to have daily insulin injections

A person with type 1 diabetes does not make any of their own insulin. We cannot live without insulin so it must be injected, usually 2-4 times a day with a syringe, insulin pen or an insulin pump.

Sometimes I have a 'hypo'

Hypoglycaemia or 'hypo' is the term used when the blood glucose level is too low. This may happen if I have exercised more than normal, missed a meal or had too much insulin. When I am hypo I can get shaky, sweaty, angry, hungry, tired, grumpy, confused, blurred vision and tingling or numb lips and mouth.

When this happens I need sugar (e.g. jelly beans or lemonade) straight away to quickly increase my blood glucose level. After that I need a piece of fruit or a sandwich to make sure my blood glucose level does not drop again. If I am unconscious do not give me anything to eat. Call an ambulance on 000 immediately.

Diabetes FACTS

"You can't catch diabetes"

"You can eat sugar if you have diabetes"

"It's not only overweight or old people who get diabetes"

"It's not a great idea, but if I forget an injection I won't die"

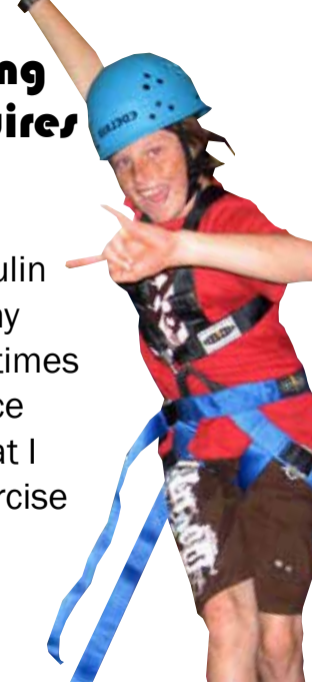
"You can travel with diabetes"

"You can go bungee jumping with diabetes"



Diabetes is a lifelong condition that requires constant attention

To manage my diabetes I need to have multiple insulin injections daily and test my blood sugar four or more times each day. I need to balance insulin injections with what I eat, especially when I exercise and I always need to be prepared for a hypo.



Diabetes doesn't stop me from having a normal life

People with diabetes can do most of the things that anyone else can do including sports, travel and having children. There are AFL footballers, Olympic swimmers and mountain climbers with type 1 diabetes. I just need to remember to carry my diabetes gear, extra food and jellybeans with me.