

## TREATMENT

No cure yet exists for Type 1 Diabetes. Untreated, it can lead to serious conditions, such as a diabetic coma and even death.

**Fortunately, Type 1 Diabetes can be treated easily through insulin replacement therapy.**

Insulin must enter the blood to work, so it is most commonly delivered via syringe injection, "spray" injector, or the use of an unobtrusive insulin pump. An effective method of oral delivery has not yet been developed because acids in the stomach destroy insulin. Insulin replacement must continue for life.

In rare circumstances, a pancreas transplant may be indicated, but it is generally not practical. Few are available, the procedure is difficult, and the complications from an organ transplant procedure are especially hard on diabetics.



### American Diabetes Association

(800) DIABETES  
[www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org)

### National Diabetics Information Clearinghouse

(800) 860-8747  
[www.diabetes.niddk.nih.gov](http://www.diabetes.niddk.nih.gov)

### American Dietetic Association

(800) 877-1600  
[www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)

### Diabetes Resource Center

[www.diabetesresource.com](http://www.diabetesresource.com)

### Children with Diabetes Foundation

[www.childrenwithdiabetes.com](http://www.childrenwithdiabetes.com)

## RESOURCES

## TYPE 1 DIABETES

This brochure is not intended to substitute for professional advice or treatment. Please consult with your physician.

# WHAT IS TYPE 1 DIABETES?

**Type 1 Diabetes** is a chronic condition in which the body's immune system destroys the cells in the pancreas that produce insulin, a hormone which controls the conversion of glucose (sugar) into energy. Sugar then builds up in the blood. Over time, the excess blood sugar can damage other organs; meanwhile, the body is forced to turn to fat cells for energy. Unfortunately, the body is not designed to use fat as a long-term energy source, and this process leads to a gradual build-up of ketones (acids) in the blood. Excess ketones can lead to diabetic coma or even death. Luckily, Type 1 Diabetes is treatable, and healthy lifestyle choices can help reduce the negative effects. **Awareness and vigilance are key.**

Type 1 represents 10 percent of people with diabetes. Sometimes called juvenile-onset diabetes, Type 1 Diabetes does tend to affect younger people. However, this kind of diabetes has to do more with insulin production than age, so it's more appropriately called **insulin-dependent diabetes**. Unfortunately, the assumption that Type 1 Diabetes only occurs in younger patients can sometimes lead to a misdiagnosis. Talk with your doctor if you have concerns or questions.



## Symptoms & Warning Signs

- **Unusual thirst.** The body's self-regulating mechanisms try to eliminate the excess blood sugar; this process requires more liquid.
- **Extreme fatigue.** The body's energy demands are not being met efficiently.
- **Frequent urination.** The body literally tries to rid itself of the excess glucose.
- **Unexpected weight loss.** The body turns to fat cells for energy.
- **Blurred vision.** High blood sugars can cause the lens in the eyes to fill with fluid.
- **Cuts that are slow to heal.** Though not well understood, it is believed diabetes affects cell-to-cell communication.

## Risk Factors & Prevention

It's not clearly known what causes Type 1 Diabetes, which makes preventative measures uncertain as well. Nevertheless, certain factors do seem to increase the risk for diabetes in general. If any of these risk factors apply to you, it is even more important to make smart eating and lifestyle choices, and to visit a doctor for regular checkups.

- Age
- Family history of diabetes
- Obesity
- Inactive/sedentary lifestyle

## Managing Diabetes

### Eating

Healthy eating helps keep blood sugar closer to optimum levels and reduces the risk of complications like heart disease. Diabetes does not mean you can never again eat sugary foods. Sugar does not cause diabetes (that's a myth), but anything that contains carbohydrates (from simple sugars to starches) does cause blood sugar levels to rise. A diabetic must be attentive to the effect of food on their blood sugar level, but good nutrition – with a little planning and education – can still encompass many of your favorite foods.

### Fitness

Physical activity has numerous benefits: it can lower blood glucose levels, decrease blood pressure, improve circulation, augment the body's ability to use insulin, and help you achieve your target weight. You don't have to run a marathon to reap the benefits. Any activity that gets you moving will help, such as walking and yard work.

### Vigilance

Monitor blood sugar, keep a diary to monitor the effects of food and physical activity, and follow your doctor's prescriptions. When you know how different foods and exercises will affect your blood sugar, you can make smart eating and fitness choices. Remember you are not alone: your doctor can provide invaluable information and support. Always follow your doctor's instructions and take medications as prescribed.

