

GETTING ACTIVE

Most people with diabetes benefit from increasing the amount of exercise they do each day. Exercising doesn't have to mean slogging away for hours at the gym: fortunately it can be something you enjoy doing such as walking, gardening, swimming, dancing or jogging. If you haven't done any exercise for a while you will need to have your doctor do a check-up before you start and build up your fitness slowly. A good target to aim for is half-an-hour of exercise most days of the week.

There are hundreds of different ways you can increase your daily exercise, so have fun out there!



For further information on Type 2 diabetes, please contact your General Practitioner or local Diabetes Educator.

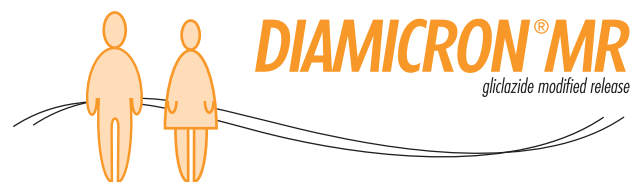
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AN INTRODUCTION TO TYPE 2 DIABETES

Many people think of diabetes as a disease of children and younger people (Type 1 diabetes). In fact, another form of diabetes, called Type 2 diabetes, is far more common.

HOW MANY PEOPLE HAVE TYPE 2 DIABETES?

The number of people with diabetes is steadily increasing throughout Australia. It is estimated that 1 million Australians have diabetes.

WHO GETS TYPE 2 DIABETES?

Type 2 diabetes usually appears in people over the age of 40 who are often, but not always, overweight.

Women are more susceptible to Type 2 diabetes than men and diabetes tends to run in families. If you have diabetes, it is likely that about one in four of your close relatives (parents, sisters, brothers or children) also have diabetes, or will develop diabetes in the future. Unfortunately, people with Type 2 diabetes are more likely to develop a number of related diseases, so extra care is necessary.

Over the past few years Type 2 diabetes has been found in children and young people. The reason for this is thought to be due to a lack of exercise and being overweight.

WHAT IS TYPE 2 DIABETES?

People with Type 2 diabetes are unable to make enough insulin to meet the body's needs, or are unable to respond normally to the insulin that they do produce. When this happens, a type of sugar called glucose builds up in the blood. Over time, complications of high blood glucose can damage the eyes, kidneys, nerves, heart and major arteries.

Insulin is made by the pancreas, a gland that lies behind the stomach. Insulin is released after meals, and works mainly on the liver, muscles and fatty tissues.

WHAT DOES INSULIN ACTUALLY DO?

Insulin allows muscle cells to absorb and store glucose so that it can be used for energy during exercise.

Insulin also allows the liver to absorb glucose from the blood so it can be stored for later use. If there isn't enough insulin, the liver cannot store glucose and instead releases large amounts of it into the bloodstream. This is the main reason people with Type 2 diabetes have high blood glucose levels.

Fat cells need insulin to use the fat that you eat in your diet. Fat cells store fat that can be used to produce energy when you need it.

HELPING YOURSELF

Studies of people with diabetes show that good blood glucose control prevents or delays the onset of diabetes complications. Eating a normal healthy diet and undertaking regular exercise is one of the most effective ways of controlling your diabetes, your weight and your risk of developing heart disease.



MEDICINES TO TREAT DIABETES

When diabetes cannot be controlled by diet and exercise, your doctor may prescribe tablets. There are two main types of tablets, which work in different ways. Both help to lower blood glucose and sometimes you may need to take more than one type. Over time, some patients with Type 2 diabetes may require insulin injections as well or instead of tablets to control their blood glucose levels. Whichever treatment you need to take, controlling your blood glucose will help to keep you healthy and feeling good.