

# **18** Diabetes

Time Taken:  
20 Minutes

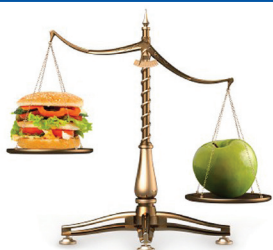


## Objectives

This section will provide participants with information about Diabetes.





**Step 1**

## What is Diabetes?

Tell participants today's topic is diabetes.

- We get energy from the food we eat.
- Our body needs insulin to use the energy from our food.
- Insulin moves the food sugars from our blood into our cells. In our cells, the sugars are used for heat and energy. When someone has diabetes their body has a problem making enough insulin.
- There are two types of Diabetes - Type 1 and Type 2: Type 1 diabetes is when the body can't make any insulin. Type 2 diabetes is when there is not enough insulin being made in the body or your body isn't using it properly.

## Advanced

If participants can easily understand the previous section you can continue with this information, otherwise skip on to the next step.



- ◆ **Type 1 Diabetes** as mentioned before is when no insulin is being made in your body. Your pancreas, an organ in your body that makes the insulin stops working. When this happens it is important for the person to take insulin through a small injection or a pump to keep your blood sugars at a normal level. The pump is continuous and the injections must be taken regularly (2-4 times a day).

- **Type 2 Diabetes** is when your body doesn't make enough insulin to meet your body's needs. Your pancreas in this case, is making insulin, but it is not enough to move all the food sugars into your cells. The blood sugars then become too high in your body.

**Step 2**

## Risk Factors

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Explain to participants that some factors in your life may make you more likely to get type 2 diabetes.

**Go through each risk factor with the participants.**

- **Family History:** If a parent or sibling (brother or sister) in your family has diabetes, there is a greater chance of you having diabetes.
- **Being Overweight:** Being overweight can prevent (stop) the body from using the insulin.
- **Age:** The chance of getting type 2 diabetes increases with age.



- **Not being physically active:** Regular exercise keeps you fit and helps maintain a healthy weight. This allows the insulin to work better. So if you are not physically active you have a greater chance of getting type 2 diabetes.
- **Diet:** A diet high in fat, calories and cholesterol increases your risk of type 2 diabetes. Also a poor diet can lead to obesity.
- **Medical Conditions:** Some people with certain medical conditions and syndromes are more likely to develop diabetes. Examples of such syndromes are Prader Willi and Down's Syndrome.
- **Smoking:** Smoking prevents the body from using insulin properly, increasing the risk of diabetes.



**Step 3**

## Health Protective Behaviours

There are certain things that we can do to help prevent getting type 2 diabetes:

- Eat a healthy diet- low in refined sugars and saturated fats to help reduce the risk of diabetes.
- Take regular physical activity at least 30 minutes five days per week. Physical activity promotes weight loss but also lowers blood sugars helping in the prevention of diabetes.
- Have a regular check up with your GP (every six months).
- If overweight, you may need to reduce your calorie intake and increase your physical activity to lose weight.
- Do not smoke - smoking is associated with a higher risk of getting diabetes.





**Step 4**

## Symptoms of Diabetes

The main symptoms of Diabetes are as follows:

- Feeling extremely thirsty despite how much you drink.
- Going to the toilet much more often than usual.
- Feeling very tired.
- Losing weight in a short space of time even though you are eating the same amount as normal.
- The symptoms are not really noticeable in type 2 diabetes so if you are at risk, you should ask your doctor to do a blood test regularly.

