

# Diabetes

## Recognising, understanding

There are 2 types of diabetes (types 1 and 2). We talk mostly about type 1 diabetes as this is the type which happens to children and young people. You can't catch diabetes, it isn't a bug, you 'develop' it. Type 1 diabetes happens when the body does not produce enough insulin. This means that glucose produced in the breakdown of food (digestion) stays in the blood.

If you are diagnosed (your GP or a health professional has confirmed you have it) you may feel overwhelmed, angry, and worried about the future. You will now need insulin injections, or insulin using an insulin pump. A Diabetes Care Team will help and support you, you are not alone.

It's perfectly normal to have difficult feelings when you are diagnosed with diabetes. However, the condition doesn't have to take away your freedom, or end your usual family life. What it does mean is that you have to carefully manage your condition as part of daily life.

## Early days

On diagnosis at the hospital your Specialist Diabetes Team will help and support you to manage your diabetes. Children and young people are cared for by a Specialist Diabetes Team at the Hospital. This team has:

- A Consultant Paediatrician who specialises in diabetes.
- Children and young person's Specialist Diabetes Nurses.
- A Dietician who is trained in the needs of children and young people.
- A Psychologist with a speciality in children and young people.

Soon you'll be confident enough to take the first steps towards managing your diabetes. You will be in regular touch with your Diabetes Care Team. The Team keep in touch via clinic's some of which are in an evening, email telephone via a 24 hours helpline. The Specialist Nurses can visit you at home and at school.

## Signs and symptoms of Diabetes

Contact your GP urgently if you notice the signs below. If you cannot get an appointment the same day please attend a Walk-In Centre or A&E and explain your symptoms.

- Feeling very thirsty and having a dry mouth.
- Going to the toilet frequently, particularly at night.
- Feeling very tired and drowsy.
- Weight loss.

Signs that you could be seriously unwell - all of the above plus vomiting, abdominal pain and difficulty breathing.

## Who can help?

- School Nurse
- GP
- Parent/carer
- Diabetes Team

## Contacts

- [www.diabetes.org.uk](http://www.diabetes.org.uk)