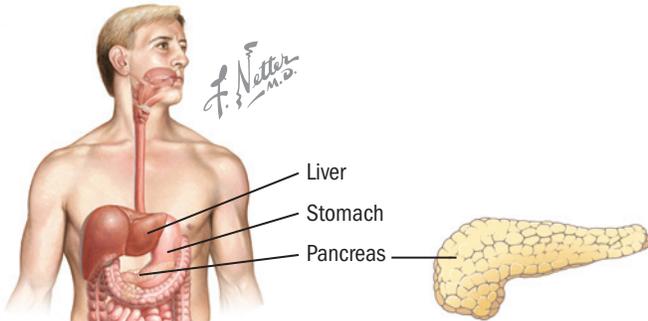
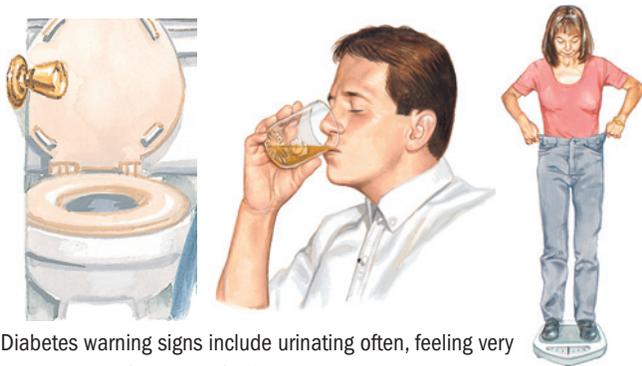


# MANAGING YOUR DIABETES MELLITUS TYPE 1: FOR ADULTS



Diabetes mellitus type 1 prevents the body from getting energy from sugar (glucose) in food. The body doesn't make enough insulin, a hormone made by the pancreas that controls how much glucose cells get from blood. People with diabetes have a high blood sugar level.



Diabetes warning signs include urinating often, feeling very thirsty, getting frequent infections, losing weight quickly, and feeling tired and weak.



Signs and symptoms of uncontrolled diabetes include blurred vision or blindness, slow-healing skin sores, numbness in hands or feet, and kidney failure (needing dialysis).



For diagnosis, your doctor uses a medical history, physical examination, and blood sugar values, including fasting and nonfasting levels, HbA1c test, and glucose tolerance tests. The doctor may also test kidney function and measure blood fat (lipid) level.

## What Is Diabetes Mellitus Type 1?

Diabetes mellitus type 1 (or just diabetes) is a lifelong disorder that prevents the body from getting energy from food. The body doesn't make enough insulin, a hormone produced by special beta cells in the pancreas. Insulin is vital because it controls the amount of sugar (glucose) that body cells get from the blood. People with diabetes have too much sugar in the blood, and not enough sugar getting into body cells.

Slightly more men than women have diabetes. It often starts at ages 12 to 15 years, with most cases diagnosed before age 30. More than 300,000 people in the United States have type 1 diabetes.

## What Causes Diabetes?

Not enough insulin is the cause. In most diabetic people, the body's own defense, the immune (infection-fighting) system, destroys beta cells in the pancreas, but the reason for this isn't fully known. Other rarer causes are certain diseases, such as cystic fibrosis, which affects the pancreas, and surgical removal or severe inflammation (swelling, irritation) of the pancreas.

## What Are the Symptoms of Diabetes?

Diabetes warning signs include urinating often, feeling very thirsty, getting frequent infections, losing weight quickly, and feeling tired and weak. Symptoms of uncontrolled diabetes also include blurred vision or blindness, slow-healing skin sores, numbness in hands or feet, and kidney failure (needing dialysis).

In diabetic ketoacidosis, another complication of diabetes, substances (ketones) accumulate. Ketones in the blood make the blood dangerously acidic, which affects multiple organs including the brain and can be life-threatening, if not rapidly diagnosed and treated in the hospital.

## How Is Diabetes Diagnosed?

For diagnosis, the doctor uses a medical history, physical examination, and different measures of blood sugar. These measures include fasting and nonfasting levels, average glucose levels during 2 to 3 months (hemoglobin A1c [HbA1c] test), and glucose tolerance test. The doctor may also do kidney tests and measure blood fat (lipid) level.



A special diet will help control blood sugar. Eat snacks at the same time every day. Insulin injections are given at home, usually two or three times daily. The doctor can explain how to give them.



Blood sugar levels need checking often, which can be done with a glucometer. You must watch for signs that the blood sugar level is too low.

Get enough exercise and sleep. The doctor will suggest exercises to help control blood sugar levels.



Take good care of your feet. Regular foot care and eye checkups are needed to prevent complications.



Don't smoke or use alcohol. Smoking is dangerous to your health, and alcohol can affect (increase) blood sugar levels and make diabetes worse. Don't get dehydrated or eat foods that your doctor or dietitian doesn't suggest.

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How Is Diabetes Treated?

A special diet will help control blood sugar. A nutritionist can help manage this diet. Blood sugar levels need checking often, which can be done with a glucometer. People must watch for signs that the blood sugar level is too high or too low. Insulin injections are given at home, usually two or three times daily. The doctor can explain how to give them.

The doctor will suggest exercises to help control blood sugar levels.

Regular foot care and eye checkups are needed to prevent complications.

DOs and DON'Ts in Managing Diabetes Mellitus:

- ✓ **DO** follow your special diet and eat snacks at the same time every day.
- ✓ **DO** get enough exercise and sleep.
- ✓ **DO** check your blood sugar level if you're sick. Call your doctor if you have fever, nausea, or vomiting and can't keep down solids or liquids.
- ✓ **DO** call your doctor if your blood sugar level is too high.
- ✓ **DO** go to the hospital right away if you have a seizure, can't wake up, or lose consciousness.
- ✓ **DO** follow your doctor's orders about insulin exactly.
- ⊗ **DON'T** smoke or use alcohol. They can affect blood sugar levels and make diabetes worse.
- ⊗ **DON'T** eat food with high sugar content.
- ⊗ **DON'T** use more insulin than your doctor recommends, it can lower your sugar to a dangerous level.
- ⊗ **DON'T** get dehydrated.
- ⊗ **DON'T** eat foods that your doctor or dietitian doesn't suggest.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact the following sources:

- National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse  
Tel: (800) 860-8747  
Website: <http://diabetes.niddk.nih.gov>
- American Diabetes Association  
Tel: (800) DIABETES (342-2383)  
Website: <http://www.diabetes.org>