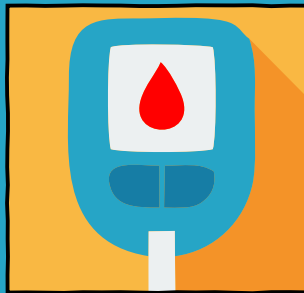


# Groundswell

Out of homelessness

## Diabetes



### What is diabetes?

Diabetes is a condition caused either by a **lack of insulin being produced by your body** (deficiency), or your body not reacting properly to your own insulin (resistance). Insulin is produced by the pancreas (an organ) and allows glucose (sugar) in our blood to enter cells which creates energy for our bodies. Insulin helps move sugar from the blood into the organs and tissues where it is needed.

**When you have diabetes, sugar stays in your blood causing 'high blood sugar'**. When blood sugars are high, sugar levels in the organs and tissues are low, and this can create serious problems. Diabetes can also sometimes lead to your sugar levels falling (called a 'hypo' or 'low blood sugar'). This is also serious and can lead to a collapse.

## There are 3 main types of diabetes:



1

**Type 1 diabetes** is where the body's immune system attacks and destroys the cells in the pancreas that produce insulin.

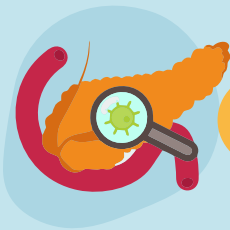
This type always needs to be treated with insulin.



2

**Type 2 diabetes** is where the body gradually stops producing enough insulin, or the body's cells do not react properly to insulin.

This type can be treated with diet only, or diet and medication, but sometimes also develops to the point where injectable insulin treatment is needed.



3

**Type 3c diabetes** is where another disease causes damage to the pancreas. The conditions related to type 3c are pancreatic cancer, pancreatitis, cystic fibrosis or haemochromatosis.

This type usually needs insulin and may need some additional treatments.

## Diabetes can be very serious if not managed.

It increases your risk of developing other health conditions including heart disease, stroke, dementia, nerve damage, foot ulcers, blindness, chronic kidney disease, skin problems, blood circulation difficulties, muscle wasting and damage to your joints.

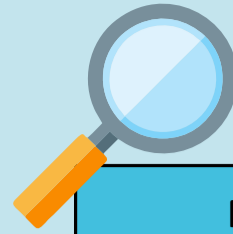
## Early diagnosis helps prevent complications that can be caused by diabetes.



- The good news is there are diets and medications that can be given to manage the condition, and new technology that can make the types of diabetes that need insulin much easier to monitor.



- There isn't a one-size-fits-all treatment for Type 3c diabetes. Your healthcare team will help you find what works for you.



## More information and support

### Contact Diabetes UK:

- Call **0345 123 2399** Monday to Friday 9am – 6pm (England, Wales, and Northern Ireland)
- Call **0141 212 8710** Monday to Friday 9am – 6pm (Scotland)
- Email [helpline@diabetes.org.uk](mailto:helpline@diabetes.org.uk)
- Diabetes UK has a good range of recipes for those with diabetes: <https://www.diabetes.org.uk/guide-to-diabetes/recipes>

Sources: Diabetes UK and NHS England

## What are the symptoms of diabetes?

- Feeling very thirsty.
- Going to the toilet (urinating) more frequently than usual.
- Leg cramps and pain.
- Feeling very hungry (even though you are eating enough).
- Sudden weight or muscle loss.
- Itching around your penis or vagina.
- Blurred vision and changes to your eyesight.
- Extreme tiredness.
- Cuts or wounds that are slow to heal.
- Tingling pain or numbness in your hands or feet.
- Dry skin.
- Regular infections.

If you are experiencing any of these symptoms or think you might have diabetes for any other reason, you should see an outreach nurse or your GP.

Everyone has a right to see a GP. You do not need ID or a fixed address to register with a GP and your immigration status does not matter.



## Your local diabetes service can be found at:



# Groundswell

Out of homelessness

Everyone has the right to good health and to access healthcare. People experiencing homelessness face health inequalities, they are often excluded from information and services. That's why Groundswell produces accessible health guidance for people experiencing homelessness, so they can make informed decisions about their health. All our health guides are created alongside people with experience of homelessness and reviewed by relevant professionals.



[www.groundswell.org.uk](http://www.groundswell.org.uk)

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