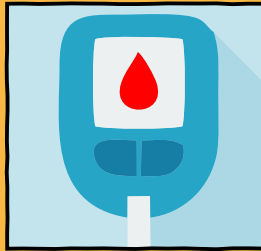


# Groundswell

Out of homelessness

## Managing diabetes



### How you can help to manage your diabetes?

- Try to eat less sugary, fried and highly processed foods, and more salad and vegetables and proteins like eggs, tuna, and chicken breasts.
- Move or exercise regularly.
- Reduce alcohol consumption.
- Reduce tobacco consumption (smoking).

We know some of these steps may feel difficult when you are experiencing homelessness but please speak to your Support Worker and ask for help with creating small and achievable goals you can work towards.

**The risk of developing type 2 diabetes increases if you are older, overweight, have high blood pressure, have a family history of diabetes, or are from a Black African, Black Caribbean or South Asian background.**

## I have diabetes, how can I manage it?

Diabetes can sometimes feel overwhelming and complicated to manage.

Try to follow the advice below, but if you need help, please ask for extra support from a professional you trust, such as a nurse, GP, Key Worker or advocate.



- Try to eat as healthy and balanced a diet as possible. Ask a health professional for help with this. They may be able to refer you to a dietician for extra help.



- Keep active in a manageable way, for example going for a short walk.



- Take the medication as recommended by your GP or specialist diabetes team. If you have difficulties taking your medication for any reason, e.g. lack of storage, you find it difficult to organise yourself or you find some aspect practically difficult (like getting tablets out of blister packs), ask for help from a health professional or your support worker.

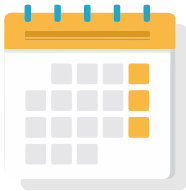
## I have diabetes, how can I manage it? ... continued



- Monitor your Blood Glucose before meals if you have been advised to do so.



- Don't reuse insulin needles or Blood Glucose lancets (for blood glucose testing).



- Attend once yearly check-ups with your GP or diabetes nurse – ask for an annual check if you have not been called for one.



- Have an eye screening at least once a year – diabetes can damage the blood vessels behind the eyes and increases your risk of blindness.



## I have diabetes, how can I manage it? ... continued



- It is important to have a foot screening once a year to check for any of the problems diabetes can cause with your feet, e.g. nerve damage.



- If you drink alcohol, try to avoid drinking on an empty stomach as this can result in a 'hypo' (when blood sugar levels go too low). Alcohol can also interfere with medications. Alcohol intake should be reduced if possible, especially with alcohol that is high in sugar (e.g. cider).

If you want to stop drinking it is important you seek the advice of a professional first – it can be dangerous to stop immediately.



- Injecting drugs can damage your skin and addictions make your diabetes very difficult to manage. People who inject drugs who have diabetes need to ask for immediate support.

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.



## 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



### 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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Groundswell's Registered Charity Number 1089987

Updated June 2024