

## What is diabetes

Diabetes is a condition where there is too much glucose (sugar) in the bloodstream. It can happen when the body cannot use insulin effectively or does not produce enough or any insulin at all.

### Types of diabetes

There are three main types of diabetes:

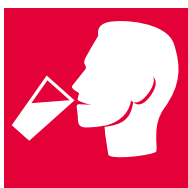
- type 1 diabetes
- type 2 diabetes
- gestational (pregnancy) diabetes.

People living with type 1 diabetes cannot produce insulin because the body's immune system damages the insulin-making cells (beta cells) in the pancreas. People develop type 2 diabetes usually because the body becomes less sensitive to the action of insulin and over time makes less insulin. Gestational diabetes occurs in women during pregnancy when the hormones produced by the placenta reduce the effectiveness of insulin.

All types of diabetes are serious and everyone living with diabetes requires an individual treatment plan and regular review.

### Signs and symptoms of diabetes

Signs and symptoms that may indicate diabetes include:



feeling very thirsty



blurry vision



extreme tiredness/  
feeling lethargic



slow wound-healing



cognitive changes or confusion



unexplained weight loss



frequent urination or incontinence



glucose in the urine



signs of dehydration  
e.g. dry mouth,  
lips or skin, or  
sunken eyes

The signs and symptoms of diabetes in older people may not be as obvious as in young people. As a result, symptoms of diabetes can be mistaken for other causes including 'getting old' which may delay diagnosis.