



Diabetes

What is Diabetes?

Diabetes is a chronic condition that occurs when the body cannot produce enough insulin, or use it effectively. Insulin is a hormone produced by the pancreas that allows glucose from food to enter the body's cells, where it is converted into energy which is needed by muscles and tissues to function. As a result, a person with diabetes does not absorb glucose properly, and glucose stays circulating in the blood and reaches high concentrations (hyperglycaemia), and this damages tissues and organs over time, even leading to life-threatening health complications.

Types of Diabetes

There are two main types of diabetes:

Type 1 diabetes – Insulin dependent diabetes

Type 2 diabetes – Non-insulin dependent diabetes

Type 1 Diabetes

Type 1 diabetes occurs when the insulin cells in the pancreas are destroyed. As a result the body can no longer produce the insulin it needs. It is still unclear why this happens. The onset of type 1 diabetes usually develops in children and young adults. People with this form of diabetes are dependent on the use of daily insulin injections to control their blood glucose levels. Without insulin, serious complications and death will result.

Type 2 Diabetes

Type 2 diabetes is the most common type of diabetes. It usually occurs in adults, but is increasingly seen in children and adolescents. In type 2 diabetes, the body is able to produce insulin, but it is either not sufficient or the body is not responding to its effects. This leads to a build-up of glucose in the blood.

Signs and Symptoms of Diabetes

Abnormal thirst and dry mouth; frequent urination; extreme tiredness/lack of energy; constant hunger; sudden weight loss; slow-healing wounds; recurrent infections; blurred vision.

Complications of Diabetes

Deteriorating vision; foot ulcers; sexual impotence; skin infections; increased risk of heart attacks and strokes.

Prolonged Complications

Kidney damage (nephropathy); nerve damage (neuropathy); blindness (retinopathy); amputations.

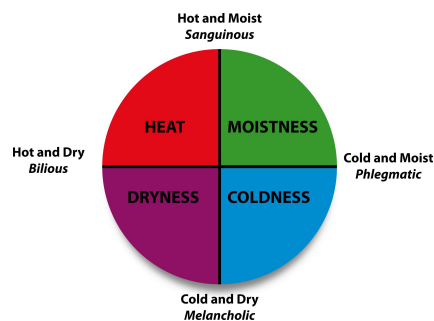
What Causes Type 2 Diabetes?

Risk factors for developing type 2 diabetes include being overweight or obese; a lack of regular physical activity; unwisely food choices (eating too much carbohydrate rich foods, for example); and a genetic predisposition. These risk factors increase **moistness** in the body.

The Tibb View on Type 2 Diabetes

Diabetes is linked to qualities of **moistness**. Heat is needed for the pancreas to function well. Excessive moistness dampens heat and results in insufficient production of insulin. Excessive moistness may also affect the tissue cells' sensitivity to insulin, resulting in increased levels of glucose circulating in the blood stream.

Individuals with a **sanguinous** dominant/sub-dominant temperament are most likely to develop diabetes. This is due to the innate qualities of **moistness** associated with this temperamental type and their predisposition to overeating. A person with a sanguinous/phlegmatic temperament is at even greater risk of developing diabetes, due to the dominance of moistness in this combination type.



Management of Type 2 Diabetes

Treatment and management is aimed at **reducing the excess moistness** associated with diabetes, by implementing Tibb Lifestyle Factors that will **increase the qualities of heat and dryness**. Lifestyle advice includes decreasing the intake of carbohydrate-rich foods and increasing levels of physical activity. This will decrease the level of moistness produced in the body and increase heat, which is needed for the proper functioning of the pancreas. This assists Physis in addressing both the symptoms and the causes of type 2 diabetes.

Tibb Lifestyle Factors

Food and Drink

- Eat **mostly Hot & Dry foods** - such as bittergourd, avocado, chickpeas, fenugreek and cinnamon, **followed by Cold & Dry foods** - like beef, fish, cauliflower and mushrooms.
- Eat **less of Cold & Moist foods** - such as carrots, pumpkin, rice and butternut, and the **least amount of Hot & Moist foods** - like bread, pasta, bananas and wheat cereals.
- Avoid hydrogenated fats, high-glycaemic, refined, processed or refrigerated foods.
- Avoid alcohol and tobacco.
- Avoid salty and sweet foods and drinks.
- Avoid fried, sugary and oily foods.
- Avoid refined sugar and fizzy drinks.
- Avoid icy and cold foods.
- Avoid high-glycaemic foods such as white rice, white flour products, starchy vegetables and many processed foods.
- Avoid eating carbohydrates like rice, bread or pasta, especially late in the date. Vegetables are acceptable.
- Eat 5 small meals per day instead of a few larger meals, especially supper. This should consist of three main meals and two snacks in between.
- Boiled/steamed/grilled steak, chicken or fish should be preferred;
- Increasing the intake of dietary fibre helps to reduce surges in blood sugar levels.
- For snacks eat fruit, vegetables or yogurt. Biltong and popcorn are also acceptable, but portion sizes should be small.
- Low carbohydrate foods such as cabbage, green beans, cauliflower leafy greens, beans, mushrooms and oranges should be included in the diet.
- Foods such as berries, eggs, fish, garlic, kelp, and most vegetables help stabilize the blood glucose levels.
- Vegetarian food should replace meats once weekly with vegetable sources of proteins such as legumes. Nuts and seeds (sesame flax and sunflower) in the diet should be increased.
- Minimize liquid intake during a meal. Drink water (preferably warm) 30 minutes before and 30 minutes after eating.
- Drink fresh vegetable juice instead of fruit juices.

Other Lifestyle Advice

- Exercise has an insulin-like effect on the body. Start with 10 minutes per day of cardiovascular exercises such as walking, running, cycling, or swimming. Gradually build up to 45-60 minutes at least three times a week;
- Foot hygiene: to avoid foot ulcers keep feet dry, and massage regularly with heating oils;
- Avoid emotional stress through breathing exercises, counseling and other appropriate measures.

Herbal Remedies

- Regular use of cinnamon (1 tsp daily added to food), cloves, and turmeric helps the body use insulin more effectively.
- Add a handful of stinging nettle to a litre of boiling water. Cover overnight. Strain and drink throughout the day.
- 100 grams each: ajmo/carrom seeds, fenugreek seeds, dried bitter melon and 250ml bitter melon juice. Mix the juice with the powder and pour it into a tray. Place the tray in a warm, dry and well ventilated place until completely dry. Use 500-1000mg 3 times a day of the powder. For children, reduce the dose by half.

