

3. Physical Activity

Being active helps with insulin management and response, weight management and in preventing complications like bone loss and heart problems. Try to include exercise, like brisk walking in your daily routine. Squats, push-ups or using resistance bands can help with strength. Choose an exercise that you enjoy, but always consult your healthcare team before starting a new activity.

4. Smoking Cessation

Smoking greatly increases the risk of complications for people with diabetes. HPDP also offers smoking cessation services. Call 8007 3333 for more information.

5. Avoid or limit alcohol consumption

6. Maintain good oral hygiene

Having high blood glucose (sugar) levels can increase your risk of developing gum disease and inflammation, dry mouth, fungal infections, and others. Managing your blood sugar levels and going for regular check-ups helps in preventing gum disease.

Medical management

Blood Glucose Testing

Regular blood glucose monitoring helps you understand how food, activity, and medications affect your blood glucose levels. The diabetes nurse will offer you training on how to measure your blood glucose levels successfully at home and on the best timing for testing.

Seeking support

HPDP can offer a variety of services that may be accessed on <https://hdp.gov.mt/eservices>. Alternatively, you may call 8007 3307 to speak to one of our nutritionists or 2326 6000 for other services.

For more information, please contact:

Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate

2326 6000



healthpromotion.hdp.gov.mt

TYPE 2 DIABETES

An information leaflet prepared
by the Health Promotion and Disease
Prevention Directorate



GOVERNMENT OF MALTA
MINISTRY FOR HEALTH
AND ACTIVE AGEING





What is diabetes?

Diabetes Mellitus is a condition characterised by a high amount of glucose (sugar) in the blood because the body cannot use it properly. Glucose comes from the food we eat, like bread, rice, pasta, and potatoes but also from sugar and other sweet foods.

Keeping glucose levels under control is the hormone insulin, produced in an organ called the pancreas. One of the functions of insulin is to move glucose from the blood into the cells, where it is then used as fuel by the body.

What is Type 2 Diabetes?

In Type 2 diabetes, the pancreas either releases less insulin into the blood, or the insulin produced does not work as well as it should (insulin resistance) leading to high blood sugar levels. Over time, this can cause serious health issues.

Healthy eating, regular exercise, adequate sleep, and stress management are all essential components in the management of diabetes. However, in some cases, tablets or injections may also be required to keep blood sugar levels under control.

What are the symptoms of diabetes?

Many people have no symptoms or have symptoms that are so mild that they may go undiagnosed for weeks. Symptoms can arise when glucose (sugar) remains unused in the blood, prompting the body to shift this excess glucose to urine in order to lower blood sugar levels. Some of the warning signs may include:



Extreme thirst



Always hungry



Urinating more than usual



Wounds that won't heal



Losing weight



Blurred vision

How is type 2 diabetes diagnosed and tested?

In most cases, diabetes is often detected during routine laboratory testing. Four common tests are used to diagnose and manage type 2 diabetes: fasting blood glucose test, Haemoglobin A1c test, oral glucose tolerance test (usually for pregnant women) and random blood glucose test.

How is type 2 diabetes treated?

There are many steps you can take to help control and manage your type 2 diabetes, in order to prevent or delay the health complications that come with it.

1. Healthy eating

The food you eat not only makes a difference in managing your diabetes, but also on how you feel, how much energy you have and your weight. Thus, a healthy varied diet is all about choosing foods that are low in fat, sugar, and salt, and rich in complex carbohydrates (wholemeal variety), fruit, an abundance of vegetables, legumes (peas, beans and lentils), meat, fish and poultry. Consumption of milk and dairy products are to be kept to a minimum. Highly processed foods are to be avoided.

2. Weight management

Try to aim for a healthy Body Mass Index (BMI) of less than 25kg/m² and waist circumference below 94 cm for men and below 80 cm for women. The Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate (HPDP) can offer support through weight management classes. Call our nutrition helpline on [8007 3307](tel:80073307) to find out more.