

## What if I do not want to make any changes?

Without treatment and lifestyle changes, your diabetes will get worse and damage your blood vessels and nerves. This can lead to problems with your kidneys, feet and eyes. Diabetes also increases your risk of heart disease and stroke.



## Support is available

Everyone with type 2 diabetes would benefit from attending a diabetes self-management course.

If you are finding it overwhelming, there are groups and people who are happy to share their tips on living well with diabetes – ask your healthcare provider about support options.



## Not sure if you have type 2 diabetes?

Many people don't know they have type 2 diabetes. The only way to find out is to have an HbA1c blood test. The higher your HbA1c number, the more you are at risk of developing diabetes-related health problems.

Book in for a diabetes screen with your healthcare provider if you:

- are overweight
- have a family history of diabetes
- had gestational diabetes while pregnant
- are of Māori, Pasifika or Indian ethnicity
- have high blood pressure.



**80% of type 2 diabetes is preventable with lifestyle changes**

## Your health is important

This information is sourced from Health Navigator NZ website, which offers trusted health information and resources that are easy to understand and free to access.

Visit our site  
[hn.org.nz/t2diabetes](https://hn.org.nz/t2diabetes)



## TYPE 2 DIABETES

### ENDOCRINE HEALTH



## Living well with type 2 diabetes



For information about how to manage type 2 diabetes, visit: [hn.org.nz/t2diabetes](https://hn.org.nz/t2diabetes)



## What is type 2 diabetes?

Type 2 diabetes is a common condition where your body is unable to control the amount of glucose in your blood. This causes high glucose levels. It happens when your body has trouble making or using a hormone called insulin. Insulin is made by your pancreas and helps your body process glucose.

Over time, it can damage your body and lead to a wide range of health problems.

## How can I avoid complications?

The best way to avoid or delay diabetes-related health problems is to keep your blood glucose, blood pressure and cholesterol levels within the healthy range. You can do this by making lifestyle changes, monitoring your blood glucose levels and taking medicines.

## Watch your glucose levels

If you have diabetes you should aim to have an HbA1c test every three to six months.

An HbA1c test measures the amount of glucose that has built up in your blood over the past three months. It also shows how well your lifestyle changes and medicines are working.



## Lifestyle changes you can make

### Move more and stay active

Aim for two-and-a-half hours of moderate physical activity each week. This could be anything that gets your heart rate up, such as taking a fast walk or dancing.



### Lose weight

If you find it difficult to lose weight, you're not alone – many people find it a struggle. The good news is there is lots of support available.



### Eat healthy food

Try to eat a wide range of foods including fruit and veges, whole grains, lean meat, fish and eggs. Aim to keep sugar, fat and salt (including processed foods and takeaways) to a minimum.



### Quit smoking

Smoking increases your risk of health problems, including heart disease, stroke and poor circulation (blood flow). It is not easy to quit, but there is support and a range of treatments to help you.



## Medicines

Most people with type 2 diabetes will also need to take medicine to help lower blood glucose and prevent health problems. Some people may only need one medicine to control their diabetes, while others may need more.

Every person's care plan is different, and your healthcare provider will work with you to find the best plan for you.



## Sick day plan

If you are taking diabetes medicines, talk to your healthcare provider about a sick day plan. This will help you to manage your medicines if you become unwell with a cold, flu, vomiting, diarrhoea, or other infections (including COVID-19).

