

TYPES OF DIABETES

Type 1 diabetes

Type 1 diabetes (previously known as insulin-dependent, juvenile or childhood-onset) is characterized by lack of insulin production and requires daily administration of insulin. The exact cause of type 1 diabetes is not known and it is not preventable with current knowledge. Most likely it is an autoimmune disorder. An infection or some other trigger causes the body to mistakenly attack the cells in the pancreas that make insulin. This kind of disorder can be passed down through families.

It can occur at any age. However, it is most often diagnosed in children, adolescents, or young adults.

Insulin is a hormone produced by special cells called beta cells, in the pancreas. The pancreas is found behind your stomach. Insulin is needed to move blood sugar (glucose) into cells, where it is stored and later used for energy. In type 1 diabetes, beta cells produce little or no insulin.

Without enough insulin, glucose builds up in the bloodstream instead of going into the cells. The body is unable to use this glucose for energy. This leads to the symptoms of type 1 diabetes.

These symptoms may be the first signs of type 1 diabetes, or may occur when the blood sugar is high:

- Being very thirsty
- Feeling hungry
- Feeling tired or fatigued
- Having blurry eyesight
- Losing the feeling or feeling tingling in your feet
- Losing weight without trying
- Urinating more often

Type 2 diabetes

Type 2 diabetes (formerly called non-insulin-dependent or adult-onset) results from the body's ineffective use of insulin. Type 2 diabetes consists of 90% of people with diabetes around the world, and is largely the result of excess body weight and physical inactivity.

Symptoms may be similar to those of Type 1 diabetes, but are often less noticeable. As a result, the disease may be diagnosed several years after onset, once complications have already arisen.

Until recently, this type of diabetes was seen only in adults but it is now also occurring in children.

When you have type 2 diabetes your fat, liver, and muscle cells do not respond correctly to insulin. This is called insulin resistance. As a result, blood sugar does not get into these cells to be stored for energy. When sugar cannot enter cells, high levels of sugar build up in the blood, this is called hyperglycemia.

Type 2 diabetes usually occurs slowly over time. Most people with the disease are overweight when they are diagnosed. Increased fat makes it harder for your body to use insulin the correct way.

Type 2 diabetes can also develop in people who are thin. This is more common in the elderly. Family history and genes play a large role in type 2 diabetes. Low activity levels, poor diet, and excess body weight around the waist increase your risk.

The early symptoms of diabetes may include:

- Bladder, kidney, skin, or other infections that are more frequent or heal slowly
- Fatigue
- Hunger
- Increased thirst
- Increased urination

The first symptom may also be:

- Blurred vision
- Erectile dysfunction
- Pain or numbness in the feet or hands

Information sourced from:

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/000305.htm>