



4 Facts You Should Know & How to Minimise Your Risk

Diabetes Awareness Week (which ran 8-14 June) is an opportunity to spread awareness of diabetes by increasing understanding and reducing stigma of the disease. This is especially important at present since diabetes has been shown to be the main 'underlying health issue' associated with major problems following COVID-19 infection.

4 facts about diabetes that you should know:

1. 1 in 5 (4.8 million) people in the UK are living with diabetes. This includes 1 million people who are unaware that they have the condition.
2. Type 1 and type 2 diabetes are the most common forms of the condition. Both forms raise sugar levels in the blood, leading to potentially dangerous health consequences.
3. The same healthy eating advice is given for everyone, regardless of a diabetic diagnoses.
4. Anyone can be diagnosed with diabetes. There are several factors that increase your risk:
 - Over 40 and white
 - Over 25 and African-Caribbean, Black African or South Asian
 - If you have a close family member with diabetes
 - If you are of South Asian, African-Caribbean or Black African descent
 - If you've ever had high blood pressure
 - If you are overweight, especially if you are carrying excess weight around your middle
 - Smoking
 - Gestational diabetes
 - Polycystic Ovary Syndrome
 - Mental health conditions (schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, depression)
 - Sedentary lifestyle
 - Excess alcohol consumption
 - Poor sleep

Minimising your risk of diabetes:

The same advice is given to everyone regardless of whether they have been diagnosed with diabetes or not.

- Have regular blood sugar level checks to ensure stability, if necessary
- Eat a healthy and well-rounded diet
- Gain a thorough understanding of diabetic management to ensure your best chances of stabilising and diminishing the condition
- Retain a healthy body weight and do not carry excess body fat
- Exercise regularly – studies have also shown that weight loss and exercise could lower the risk of developing type 2 diabetes by approximately 58%.

Find out your personal risk of developing diabetes by clicking [here](#).

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