

PATIENT INFORMATION

PAEDIATRIC DIABETES – What is Type 1 Diabetes?



What is Type 1 Diabetes?

When someone without diabetes swallows food, it goes into your stomach where enzymes break the carbohydrate part down to simple sugars. The sugars that are found in starchy food like potato, bread, cereals and pasta are taken out more slowly by the enzymes than the sugars that are in sweet food such as sugary drinks, sweets and other confectionary.

The sugar is then taken from your stomach to your small intestine where it enters your blood stream to be carried around your body. Normally, when sugar starts entering your blood stream, a hormone called **insulin** is released from a part of your body called the **pancreas**.

When you have **Type 1 diabetes**, your pancreas doesn't produce insulin any more. Your stomach will continue to take out the sugar from the food you eat but there will be no insulin to take it out from your blood stream and feed it to your body cells.

This means that **the amount of sugar in your blood keeps on going up and the cells don't get any fuel**. At this point, your body will start to tell you that something is not right. Symptoms include passing a lot of urine, feel very thirsty, tired and a person may lose weight.

We know that type 1 diabetes is an autoimmune condition. In some children and young people the body damages the beta cells in the pancreas that produce insulin so that they stop working. Once the cells stop working they cannot be fixed. There is a lot we don't know about Type 1 diabetes and why it happens to some and not others but we do know genes play a part and that diabetes is a bit more common if you have a parent with diabetes.

Your diabetes team will talk to you and explain more about diabetes. Do ask them about any questions you may have about Type 1 diabetes or any of your treatment or your child's treatment or care.

If your symptoms or condition worsens, or if you are concerned about anything, please call your GP, 111, or 999.

Patient Experience

We know that being admitted to hospital can be a difficult and unsettling time for you and your loved ones. If you have any questions or concerns, please do speak with a member of staff on the ward or in the relevant department who will do their best to answer your questions and reassure you.

Feedback

Feedback is really important and useful to us – it can tell us where we are working well and where improvements can be made. There are lots of ways you can share your experience with us including completing our Friends and Family Test – cards are available and can be posted on all wards, departments and clinics at our hospitals. We value your comments and feedback and thank you for taking the time to share this with us.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

If you have any concerns or questions about your care, we advise you to talk with the nurse in charge or the department manager in the first instance as they are best placed to answer any questions or resolve concerns quickly. If the relevant member of staff is unable to help resolve your concern, you can contact the PALS Team. We offer informal help, advice or support about any aspect of hospital services & experiences.

Our PALS team will liaise with the various departments in our hospitals on your behalf, if you feel unable to do so, to resolve your problems and where appropriate refer to outside help.

If you are still unhappy you can contact the Complaints Department, who can investigate your concerns. You can make a complaint orally, electronically or in writing and we can advise and guide you through the complaints procedure.

How to contact PALS:

Telephone Patient Services: 0300 123 1732 or via email at: wah-tr.PALS@nhs.net

Opening times:

The PALS telephone lines are open Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 4.00pm. Please be aware that you may need to leave a voicemail message, but we aim to return your call within one working day.

If you are unable to understand this leaflet, please communicate with a member of staff.