

Type 2 Diabetes

Type 2 is the most common form of diabetes, affecting 85-90% of all people with diabetes. While it usually affects older adults, more and more younger people, even children, are getting type 2 diabetes.

In type 2 diabetes, the pancreas makes some insulin but it is not produced in the amount your body needs and it does not work effectively.

Type 2 diabetes results from a combination of genetic and environmental factors. Although there is a strong genetic predisposition, the risk is greatly increased when associated with lifestyle factors such as high blood pressure, overweight or obesity, insufficient physical activity, poor diet and the classic 'apple shape' body where extra weight is carried around the waist.

Type 2 diabetes can often initially be managed with healthy eating and regular physical activity. However, over time most people with type 2 diabetes will also need tablets and many will also need insulin. It is important to note that this is just the natural progression of the disease, and taking tablets or insulin as soon as they are required can result in fewer complications in the long-term.

There is currently no cure for type 2 diabetes.

In this Section

[Cause of Type 2 Diabetes](#)

[Symptoms of Type 2 Diabetes](#)

[Preventing Type 2 Diabetes](#)

[Managing Type 2 Diabetes](#)

Cause of Type 2 Diabetes

While there is no single cause of type 2 diabetes, there are well-established risk factors. Some of these can be changed and some cannot.

You are at a higher risk of getting type 2 diabetes if you:

- have a family history of diabetes
- are older (over 55 years of age) - the risk increases as we age
- are over 45 years of age and are overweight
- are over 45 years of age and have high blood pressure
- are over 35 years of age and are from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background
- are over 35 years of age and are from Pacific Island, Indian subcontinent or Chinese cultural background
- are a woman who has given birth to a child over 4.5 kgs (9 lbs), or had gestational diabetes when pregnant, or had a condition known as Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome.

Symptoms of Type 2 Diabetes

In type 2 diabetes, many people have no symptoms at all, while other signs are dismissed as a part of 'getting older'.

By the time type 2 diabetes is diagnosed, the complications of diabetes may already be present. Symptoms include:

- Being excessively thirsty
- Passing more urine
- Feeling tired and lethargic
- Always feeling hungry
- Having cuts that heal slowly
- Itching, skin infections
- Blurred vision
- Gradually putting on weight
- Mood swings
- Headaches
- Feeling dizzy
- Leg cramps.

[Back to top](#)

Preventing Type 2 Diabetes

It is estimated that up to 60% of type 2 diabetes can be prevented. People at risk of type 2 diabetes can delay and even prevent this disease by following a healthy lifestyle. This includes:

- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Regular physical activity
- Making healthy food choices
- Managing blood pressure
- Managing cholesterol levels
- Not smoking.

[Back to top](#)

Managing Type 2 Diabetes

While there is currently no cure for type 2 diabetes, the disease can be managed through lifestyle modifications and medication.

For more information on managing type 2 diabetes, refer to the [Managing Type 2 Diabetes](#) section of this website.

Source: <http://www.diabetesaustralia.com.au/Understanding-Diabetes/What-is-Diabetes/Type-2-Diabetes/>