



Health and Wellbeing

Type 1 Diabetes

This is an autoimmune condition and it is caused by the body's own immune system destroying the insulin-making cells known as (beta-cells) of the pancreas. Type 1 diabetes causes the level of glucose also known as sugar in your blood to become too high. Insulin keeps blood glucose in the correct range and is the only treatment for it. Daily insulin therapy is required.

Although type 1 diabetes can be diagnosed at any age, it seems to occur in childhood or early adult life. In Ireland up to 5 Irish children and teenagers each week are diagnosed with type 1 diabetes with one third of people diagnosed over the age of 30.

How to diagnose Type 1 Diabetes

Your GP can test a patient by a finger prick test. It is vital to receive a diagnosis early to ensure that Diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA) does not develop. This condition requires urgent medical attention as it can be life threatening.

Signs and Symptoms

- **Weight loss:** over a short period of time there is rapid weight loss
- **Thirst:** excessive drinking, unable to quench your thirst
- **Toilet:** frequent urination especially at night
- **Tiredness:** lack of energy, you are sleeping more than usual

Other less common symptoms:

- Frequent infections
- Mood swings
- Constipation
- Bedwetting
- Vomiting and abdominal pain
- Lack of concentration
- Itchy skin infections



Newsletter

Medical Terms

Insulin: when diagnosed with type 1 diabetes most people will take 2 types of insulin. One that is taken once or twice a day. The other you take with food or drink.

Ketones: these are chemicals produced by the liver when it breaks down fats for energy, particularly when glucose is scarce. They are an alternative fuel source for the brain and the body during fasting, low carbohydrate intake or prolonged exercise.

Blood glucose levels: this should be checked regularly.

Hypoglycemia: or low blood sugar is when your blood glucose level falls below a certain range.

Hyperglycemia: blood sugar level is too high when not enough insulin is produced. This can cause fatigue, increased thirst and urination.

Supports

Diabetes Ireland

This is a national charity that is dedicated to providing education, support and motivation to people with diabetes.

Email: info@diabetes.ie

Website: [Diabetes Ireland](http://www.diabetes.ie)

Phone: 01 842 8118

HSE Type 1 Diabetes

Wellbeing Podcasts HSE
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