



DIABETES

What is Diabetes?

Diabetes means you have too much sugar (glucose) in your blood, and that your body is unable to control this. A hormone called insulin controls the amount of sugar in your blood, but in diabetes either your insulin is not working properly or your body can no longer produce enough of it.

There are two main types:

Type 1 - This is the least common form of diabetes and is insulin dependent - that is regular insulin injections are needed. This type of diabetes usually affects younger people under the age of 25.

Type 2 - diabetes, also known as non-insulin-dependent diabetes, or adult onset diabetes, accounts for 90% of all diabetes. It can often be treated effectively with a diet and regular exercise, though medication may be necessary. Paradoxically, a few people with Type 2 diabetes may eventually need a small amount of insulin, as well as their tablets.

Incidence in Ireland

The [Diabetes Federation of Ireland](#) estimates that over 200,000 people in Ireland have diabetes and that over 50% of them are unaware that they have the condition.

What Causes Diabetes?

People are more at risk of developing diabetes if they are **overweight**. It can also be **hereditary**. However it is often the case that people develop diabetes for no known reason.

Signs & symptoms of Diabetes:

If your blood sugar is very high (**hyperglycaemia**) you may experience a number of symptoms. These should disappear when your blood sugar is lower. **A normal blood sugar is between 5-7 mmol/l.**

How is Diabetes treated?

Diabetes cannot be cured. However, with the correct treatment and management, most people with diabetes can lead normal lives. Depending on individual circumstances, diabetes may be treated with insulin injections, diet and exercise, medication and regular blood glucose monitoring. Diet is an essential part of treating diabetes.



What should I do if I have been diagnosed with Diabetes?

Once your diagnosis has been confirmed your doctor should refer you to the dietetic department. Here you will receive detailed information on what foods you can and cannot eat. The number of the Bon Secours Dietetic department is: **01-8065488**.

Further information:

Irish Diabetic Association (DFI), Peterson House, Gardiner Street, Dublin 1, Phone: 01 8363022, www.diabetesireland.ie

Bon Secours Dietetic Department: Tel 01-8065488 Email: nutrition@dublin.bonsecours.ie