

DIABETES

[Snippets from 'Living with Diabetes in Nigeria' – The Cure, Care & Treatment](#)

WHAT IS DIABETES?

Diabetes is a condition that occurs when you have too much sugar (glucose) in your blood. Our body produces a hormone called Insulin and which kind of opens the gate to allow to sugar and other nutrients from our bloodstream into our body cells in order to give us energy for our different activities. Diabetes occur when the level of insulin is not enough to open that gate for the sugar or glucose to flow out.

**5M+ Nigerians
living with diabetes.
WHO/IDF Stats**

TYPE 1 DIABETES

This is diagnosed mostly in children and young adults. The pancreas is not able to produce enough insulin because the immune system has been attacked and insulin producing cells destroyed in the body. Type 1 diabetes is also called insulin-dependent diabetes because it always requires insulin treatment as against oral drugs or diet.

*3-5% cases of
Type 1 Diabetes
recorded in
Nigeria*

*Type 2 Diabetes
accounts for up to
95% of cases in
Nigeria*

TYPE 2 DIABETES

In type 2 diabetes, insulin is still produced in the body but it is either not enough or the body cells are not using the one produced properly or efficiently. This type of diabetes **accounts for up to 95% of diabetes cases in Nigeria**. It is also associated with a lot of factors like:

- Genetics/Hereditiy
- Lack of exercise
- Older age
- Obesity
- Pregnancy known as 'Gestational Diabetes'

**Children and
adolescents are
recently being
diagnosed of Type 2
Diabetes**

SYMPTOMS

The end result for both Type 1 and Type 2 Diabetes is too much sugar in the blood and some of the symptoms can be:

- Feeling thirsty always.
- Frequent urination, especially at night
- Unexplained weight loss
- Increased hunger pangs
- Blurry vision
- Sexual dysfunction
- Numbness and tingling sensation on the feet
- Vaginal infection

Some people with Type 2 Diabetes do not have any symptoms at all and therefore remain undiagnosed for years.

Always go for screening

Diabetes is also most times associated with some Multiple Chronic Conditions (MCC's) which may compound its treatment. These **MCC's** are



MCC's are more prominent and increases substantially among adults with diabetes that are over 45 years of age.

TREATMENT

To avoid complications to the eyes, feet, kidney, nerves, heart and brain, appropriate management and care should be maintained.

- Take prescribed medications.
- Have a healthy eating plan.
- Maintain a regular exercise routine.
- Get proper information about diabetes management.
- Monitor your glucose, blood pressure, cholesterol and body weight.

There is no scientifically confirmed cure for Diabetes.

- Get and keep to your health appointments.
- Maintain a healthy lifestyle (avoid smoking & alcohol)
- Avoid injuries and regularly check your feet, eyes, kidneys etc.



Dietary management is very important in the overall management of diabetes that involves diet only or the combination of diet and medication.

A Diabetic Diet in Nigeria should be well balanced, prepared from easily sourced traditional varieties and be prepared to taste pleasurable to the eater.

HOW I CAN SUPPORT PEOPLE LIVING WITH DIABETES

Diabetes is not a death sentence. You can live a healthy and long life by taking responsibility of your own care with proper education and support

Always encourage them.

Remind him/her to check their blood sugar

Assist them record their symptoms & concerns. Also learn the symptoms of low & high blood sugar and what to do about them.

Help with food choices and eat together

Also help in managing their medications and supplies

Accompany to the doctors and to other support meetings.

Exercise with them...it is equally good for your own health

To get more information on diabetes, visit

The Diabetes Association of Nigeria (DAN) Website www.diabetesnigeria.org

The International Diabetes Federation (IDF) Website www.idf.org