



British Heart
Foundation

10 MINUTES TO CHANGE YOUR LIFE

Managing diabetes



**FIGHT
FOR EVERY
HEARTBEAT**

bhf.org.uk

If you have diabetes you're more likely to have a heart attack or stroke.

The good news is there are lots of things you can do to help manage your diabetes so your risk of having a heart attack or stroke is lower.

You're in control – and by taking ten minutes every day to make small changes to your lifestyle – you could change your life.

ABOUT DIABETES AND YOUR HEART

What is diabetes?

Your blood's job is to carry **oxygen** and **nutrients** (from your food) around your body so that your **organs**, (like your heart, lungs and brain) can work properly.

Diabetes means you have too much **glucose** (a type of sugar) in your blood.

The amount of glucose in your blood is controlled by a hormone called **insulin** which is made in your body. You can get diabetes when:

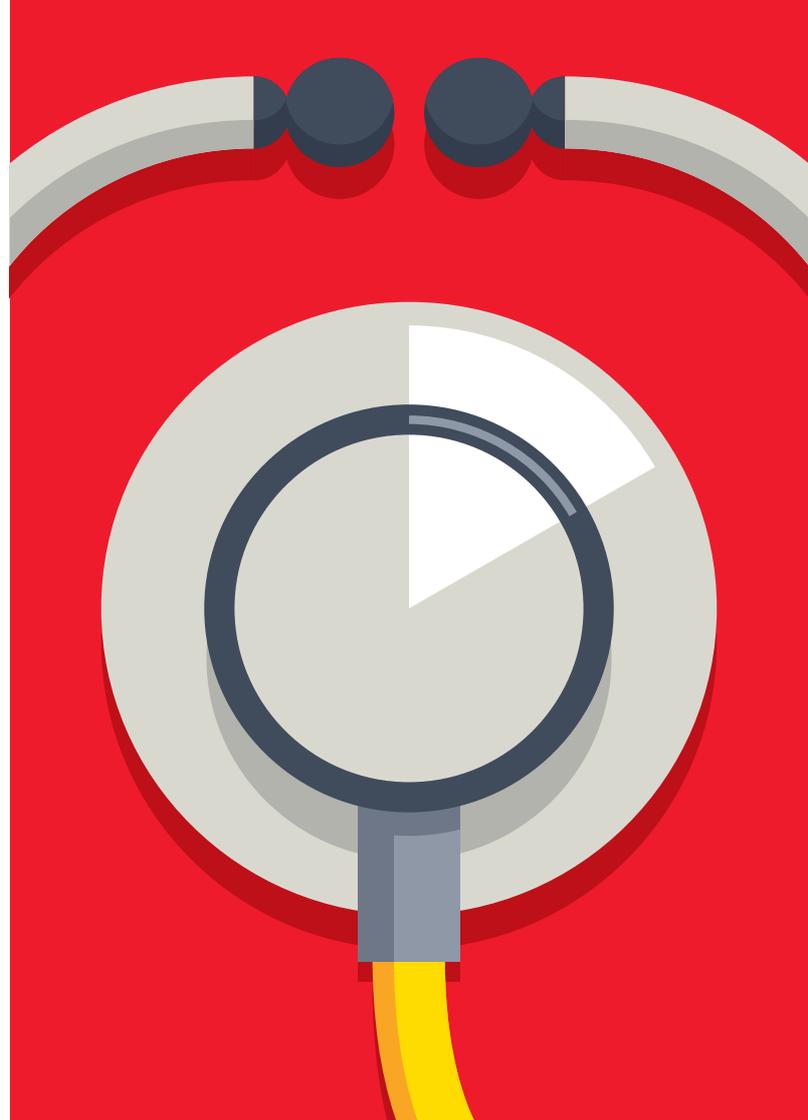
- your body doesn't make any insulin (this is called **type 1 diabetes**)
- your body doesn't make enough insulin, or it can't use the insulin properly (called **type 2 diabetes**).

Why does having diabetes put me at risk of a heart attack or stroke?

Your heart and brain need **oxygen** from your blood to work properly. If the tubes that supply your heart muscle or brain with blood (your **arteries**) get clogged up or blocked with fatty material, less oxygen can get to them.

If this happens to your heart muscle, you'll have a **heart attack**. If this happens to your brain, you'll have a **stroke**.

Having too much **glucose** in your blood can affect the walls of your **arteries**, making them more likely to get clogged up or blocked – so having diabetes means you're much more likely to have a heart attack or stroke.



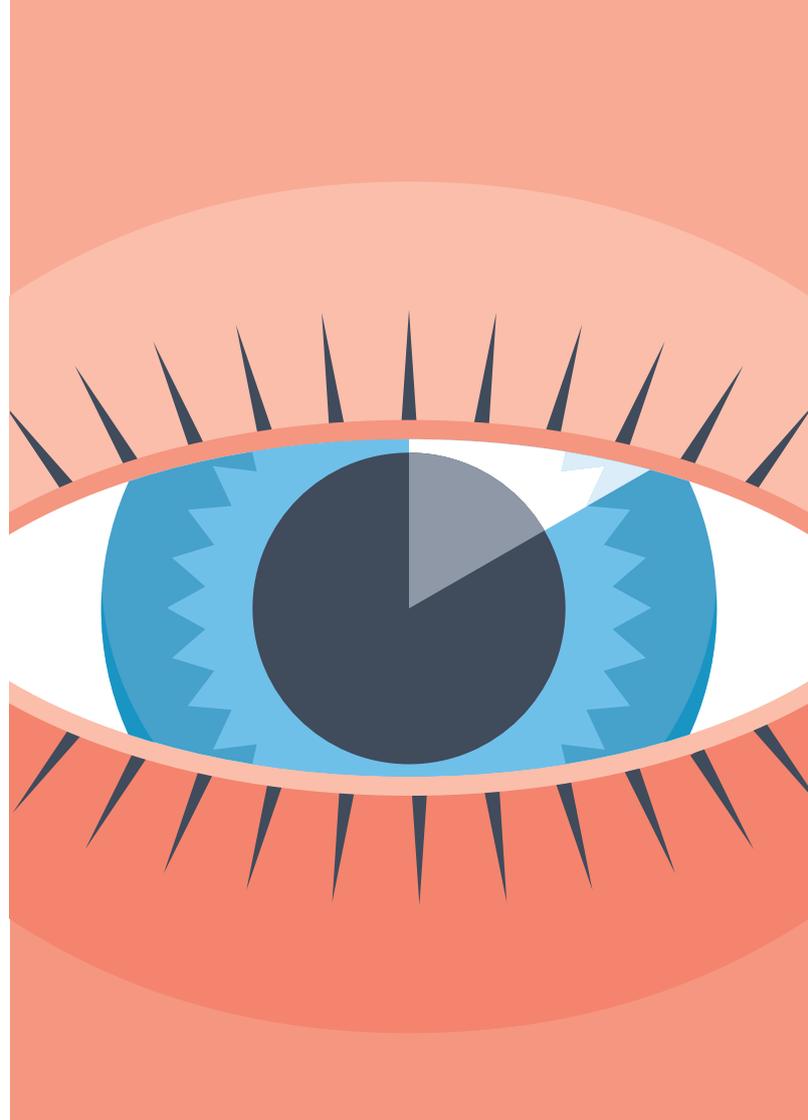
What does diabetes feel like?

The symptoms of type 1 diabetes can develop quickly. In type 2 diabetes, they may develop more slowly and people can go for a long time before finding out there's something wrong. That's why it's important to recognise diabetes.

People with diabetes often:

- feel very tired
- lose weight
- are very thirsty
- need to wee more often, mainly at night
- have blurred vision
- have itchiness around their private parts, or get thrush often
- find any cuts and wounds heal slowly.

If you're worried that you have any of these, go and see your doctor.

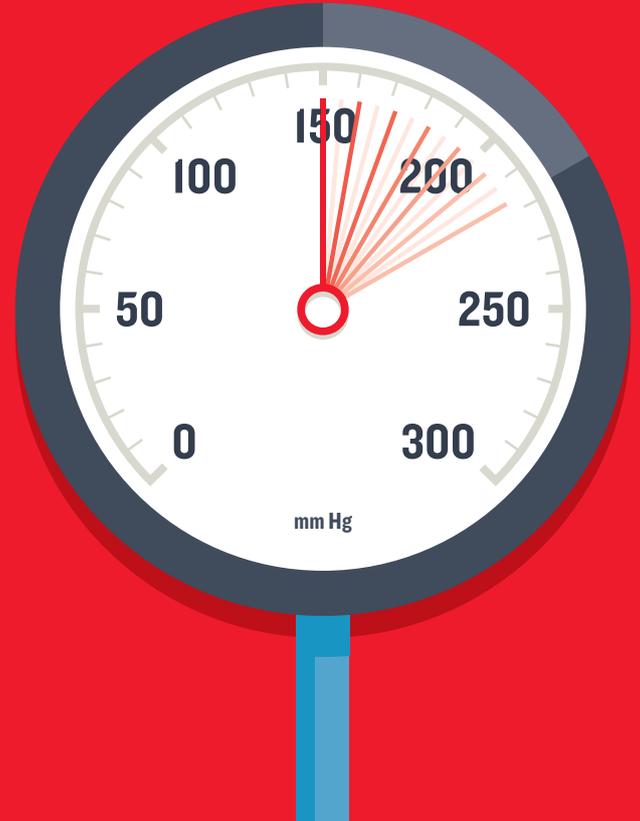


KEEPING YOUR HEART HEALTHY

To keep your heart healthy and make sure your risk of a heart attack or stroke is as low as it can be, if you've got diabetes it's really important to:

- control your blood sugar levels
- keep your blood cholesterol levels low, and
- control your blood pressure.

Doing these things will help protect your arteries, meaning they're less likely to get clogged up or blocked.

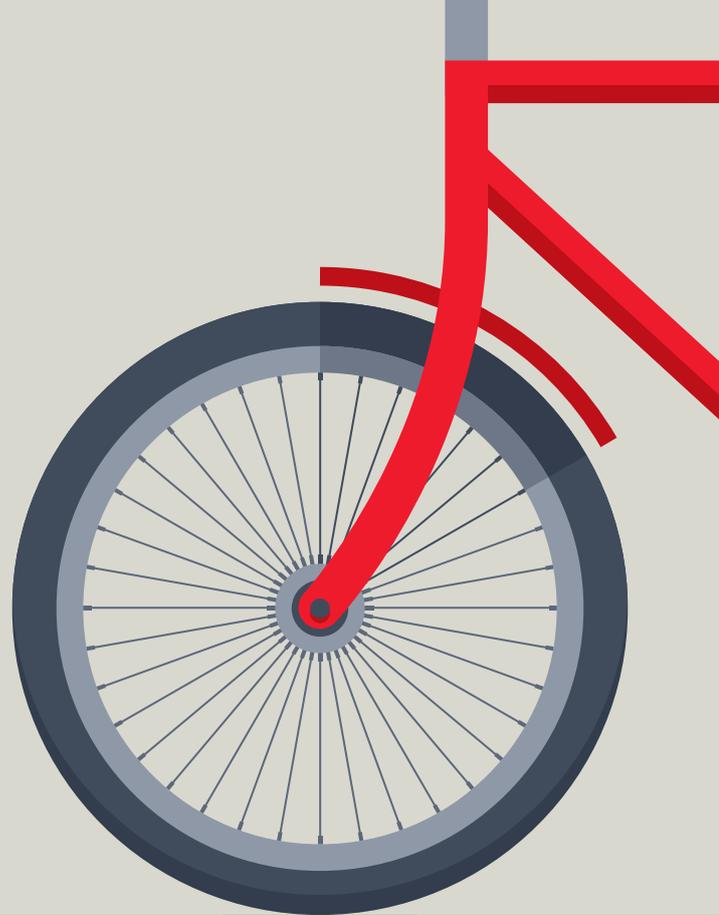


What can I do?

You can help keep your arteries healthy and your risk of heart attack and stroke down if you:

- eat a diet full of fruit and veg and low in saturated fat and salt
- get active for at least 150 minutes a week, doing physical activities that make you feel warmer, breathe harder and make your heart beat faster than usual
- keep your weight in check
- quit smoking
- take your medication to keep your blood sugar levels under control.

Take a look at the back page for your **10 minute challenge** and go to [bhf.org.uk/ten](https://www.bhf.org.uk/ten) for more in-depth advice on eating well, being active and quitting smoking.



Lyn's success story

"A few years ago a friend said I didn't look right. He was diabetic. He checked my blood sugar and took me straight to hospital.

The doctor said I was one lucky lady. Meaning my diabetes was really serious.

I was in shock. My son was 10. He thought I was going to die.

That was motivation for me to change.

I had a lovely diabetic nurse. She showed me all the benefits of helping myself. I became very conscious of what I was eating – cutting down, smaller portions – and the weight started coming off.

She advised me to walk 20 minutes every day. To this day, that has been really vital.

Now it's part of my life, and my son says I am his role model, his mentor. The best thing is, now we have a chance to stop it for him."

Find out more at [bhf.org.uk/ten](https://www.bhf.org.uk/ten)



Find out more

To find out more go to [bhf.org.uk/ten](https://www.bhf.org.uk/ten) or ring the BHF Heart Helpline on 0300 330 3311.

Lines are open 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday at a similar cost to 01 or 02 numbers.

Your doctor or nurse should also be able to give you more information.

Join us in the fight for every heartbeat

For 50 years the British Heart Foundation has been funding life-saving heart research.

From babies with heart problems to the mums, dads and grandparents who survive a heart attack, so many people need our help.

But we need your support to continue the fight against heart disease. Visit [bhf.org.uk](https://www.bhf.org.uk) to make a donation or find out more.



British Heart
Foundation

Coronary heart disease is the UK's single biggest killer.

For over 50 years we've pioneered research that's transformed the lives of people living with heart and circulatory conditions. Our work has been central to the discoveries of vital treatments that are changing the fight against heart disease.

But so many people still need our help.

From babies born with life-threatening heart problems to the many Mums, Dads and Grandparents who survive a heart attack and endure the daily battles of heart failure.

Join our fight for every heartbeat in the UK. Every pound raised, minute of your time and donation to our shops will help make a difference to people's lives.

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Managing diabetes

Your 10 minute challenge

Take a few minutes every day for a week to find some areas you could change to help keep your heart healthy.

You're in control. By taking the time to make small changes to your lifestyle, you can help keep your heart healthy, and change your life.

Day	Check the food labels: What foods did you eat that were high (red) in saturated fat or salt?	Get a move on: Make a note of any time you're active- anything from walking or gardening to swimming or team sports	Take your meds: did you take all your prescribed medication today?
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			

At the end of the week, look back over what you did and answer these questions:

Did you eat a lot of foods high in salt or saturated fat during the week?

Yes No

Were you active every day?

Yes No

Did you take your medication correctly every day?

Yes No

Choose an area to tackle to help protect your heart. Then set yourself a goal and set a date to complete it by:

Example: I will take a 30 minute walk 3 times next week.

Target date: _____ / _____ / _____