



# What is type 1 diabetes?

Type 1 diabetes is a condition where the pancreas cannot produce insulin because the body's immune system has destroyed the insulin producing cells (beta cells) in the pancreas. Without insulin there is too much glucose (sugar) in the bloodstream. Insulin is needed to allow glucose to move from the bloodstream to the cells to be used for energy.

Type 1 diabetes can be diagnosed at any age. The cause of type 1 diabetes is not yet known, and currently there is no known cure.

Glucose is an important source of energy for the body. It comes from foods that contain carbohydrates: such as bread, pasta, rice, cereals, fruits, starchy vegetables and milk. The body breaks down carbohydrates into glucose, which then enters the bloodstream.



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Insulin is needed to allow the glucose from the bloodstream to enter the body's cells to be used for energy. People with type 1 diabetes do not produce insulin and therefore need to inject it (via syringe, pen or an insulin pump).

Students with type 1 diabetes may need support from school staff to support their condition while at school. Daily support may include glucose monitoring and administering insulin.

### Key facts

- Type 1 diabetes is an auto immune condition and the cause is not fully understood
- Type 1 diabetes is not currently curable
- It is not preventable. There is nothing the student or parent/carer has done to cause the condition
- Type 1 diabetes is a complex, lifelong condition that needs decisions and actions to be made every day

### Links

<https://www.ndss.com.au/living-with-diabetes/about-you/young-people/type-1-diabetes/>

<https://www.ndss.com.au/wp-content/uploads/fact-sheets/fact-sheet-understanding-type1-diabetes.pdf>