



# THE INSIDE TRACK ON DIABETES

# LIVING WELL WITH DIABETES

Sometimes, living with diabetes can feel overwhelming. Whether you're concerned about diet, emotional wellbeing, treatments or complications, we've got you covered.

There's a lot to think about when you live with diabetes. It can be stressful trying to manage everything, but you shouldn't need to put your life on hold. We're here to help you learn how to treat and manage your condition effectively so you can live well with diabetes. In this guide you'll find advice about talking to your healthcare team, information about your rights and much more.



There's also a section about your diabetes care during coronavirus. We know that managing your diabetes during the pandemic can be difficult, and you might not know what to expect.

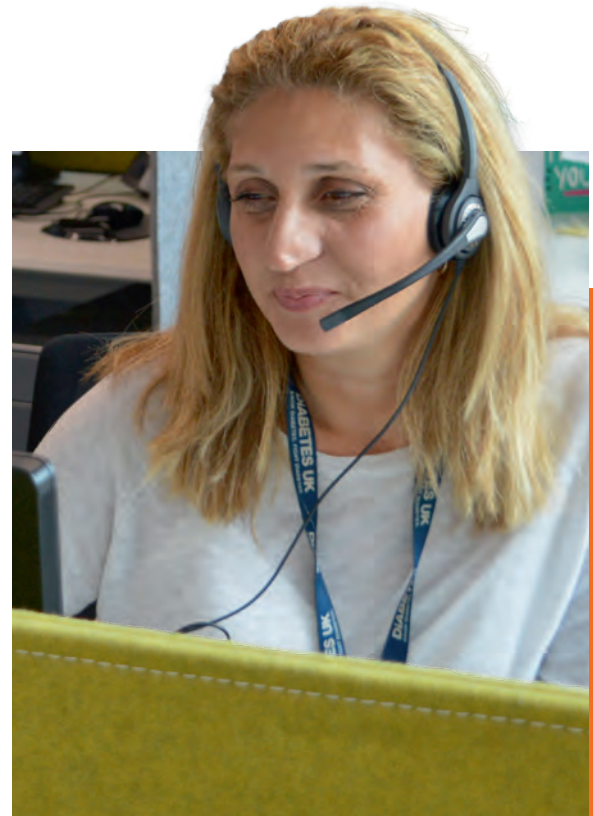
**That's why we've put together this guide. It's designed to help you understand how your healthcare team will look after you and keep you safe at the moment, and what you can do at home to stay well.**



# TALK TO SOMEONE

**We know diabetes has no off-switch. So, neither do we. Our online forum, helpline, and support groups mean you always have someone to turn to.**

We are here for anybody with diabetes, as well as family, friends, carers and anybody who's worried they might be at risk. Our helpline is confidential and staffed by highly trained advisors. They can give you specialist information and advice on all aspects of living with diabetes, and they'll take the time to talk things through with you and explore any emotional, social, psychological or practical difficulties you may be facing.



## Helpline

Call **0345 123 2399**, Monday to Friday, 9am–6pm

Email **helpline@diabetes.org.uk**

## You can also find us at

**diabetes.org.uk**

**diabetes.org.uk/forum**

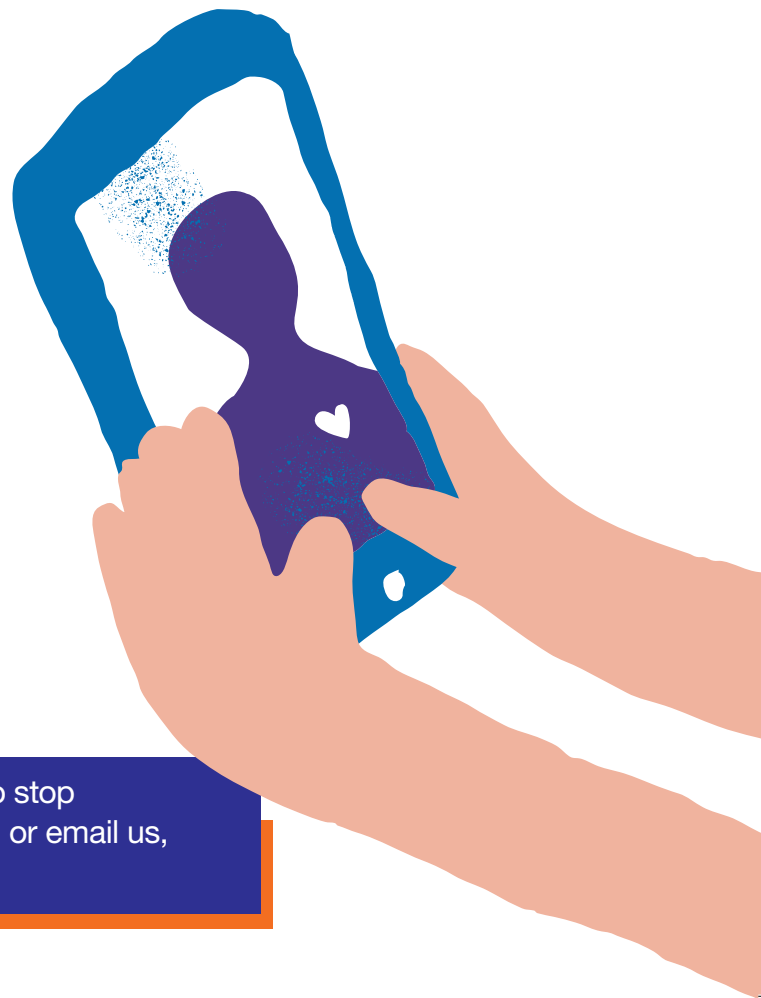
Search **Diabetes UK** on Facebook,  
Twitter, YouTube and Instagram



Or write to us at

Diabetes UK Helpline, Wells Lawrence House,  
126 Back Church Lane, London, E1 1FH

You can change how you hear from us or ask us to stop contacting you at any time. To do this, you can call or email us, or visit **diabetes.org.uk/im-in-charge**



# FIVE TIPS FOR TALKING TO YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM

## 1 Ask questions

Diabetes is complicated, and managing it can be hard. There's no such thing as a silly question – just ask.

## 2 Be prepared

Appointments can be frustratingly short for you and your healthcare professional, so take along a list of questions.

## 3 Take control

Start by telling the team what you want to get out of the appointment.

## 4 Plan ahead

If you have a lot to discuss, try and book a double appointment.

## 5 Be honest and direct

It's not always easy, but the more honest you are, the better advice you'll get. Whatever your problems are, be as descriptive as possible.

**Contact our helpline** – you don't have to wait for your healthcare appointment, we're always here to help.

**Call 0345 123 2399**

# KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Sometimes it can be difficult to get your voice heard. That's where we come in.

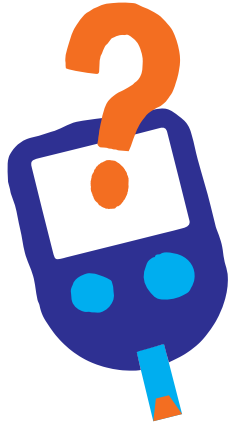
The advocacy service is here for all people with diabetes, their family, friends and carers too. We give you the information and support you need to understand your rights, know your options and make sure people listen.

We've helped people in all sorts of areas, from getting your driving licence back to talking to your employer about your rights at work. If you have a question about your rights or think you've been treated unfairly, contact our helpline on **0345 123 2399**.



# YOUR DIABETES CARE

## Checks and advice to expect from your diabetes team



### HbA1c

This blood test shows your average blood sugar levels over the last three months. If your last HbA1c test was over a year ago, contact your diabetes team for advice, especially if you check your blood sugars at home and notice they've been going up or down recently. If you use a blood glucose monitor, your team may ask you to share these results online.



### Heart and kidney checks

Your diabetes team will want to make sure your heart and kidneys are working properly. You might have blood tests to look at your cholesterol levels and blood and urine tests to see how your kidneys are working, or have your blood pressure taken. Speak to your team about when your last checks were done and how soon you might need them again.



## Eye screening

You should normally have regular eye screening but at the moment, some people have priority, for example pregnant women and people who have had changes in their vision. If you get a letter inviting you to screening, make sure to go.

## Footcare

If your regular foot check is delayed, visit [diabetes.org.uk/how-to-check](https://www.diabetes.org.uk/how-to-check) to find out how to check your feet. If you notice any changes, particularly changes in colour or temperature, or cuts or blisters, contact your foot team or GP straight away. If you've been having treatment for a foot problem, keep going to any appointments.





## Medication

Keep taking your medication and speak to your local pharmacist if you have questions.

## Checking your weight

If you can, weigh yourself at home and keep a record that you can share with your diabetes team.

## Emotional support

If you're having a tough time and need support, you might be able to refer yourself to services like counselling, without seeing your GP first.

If you need more advice about this, call our helpline advisors on **0345 123 2399** from Monday to Friday, 9am to 6pm. We're also here to listen and help if you have any worries or concerns at the moment.

# **DiABETES UK**

**KNOW DIABETES. FIGHT DIABETES.**

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