

# TYPE 1 DIABETES MADE SIMPLE

A kids' guide to type 1 diabetes

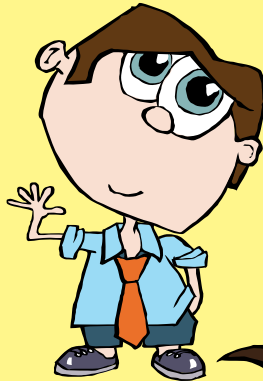


Hello we're the JDRF Glucose Gang.

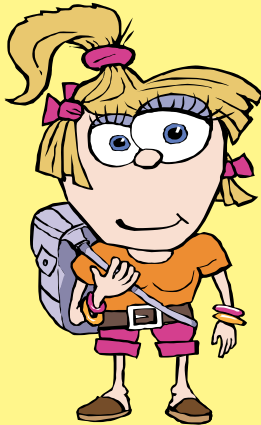
Come and join us for an exciting journey inside your body.

Learn what happens to the food you eat and what happens when you have type 1 diabetes.

Insulin Idn



Carbohydrate Cam



Beta Cell Becky

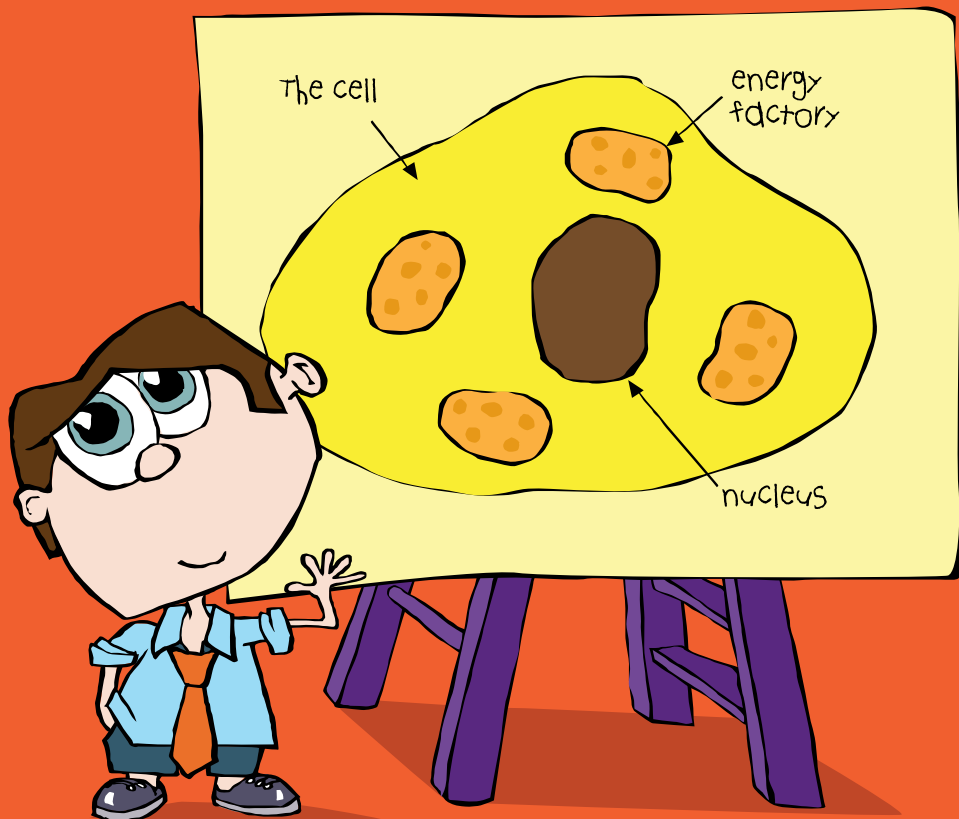


Research Rosie

The food we eat is used to make energy which our body needs to work properly. This is made in our cells, which are the building blocks of our bodies.

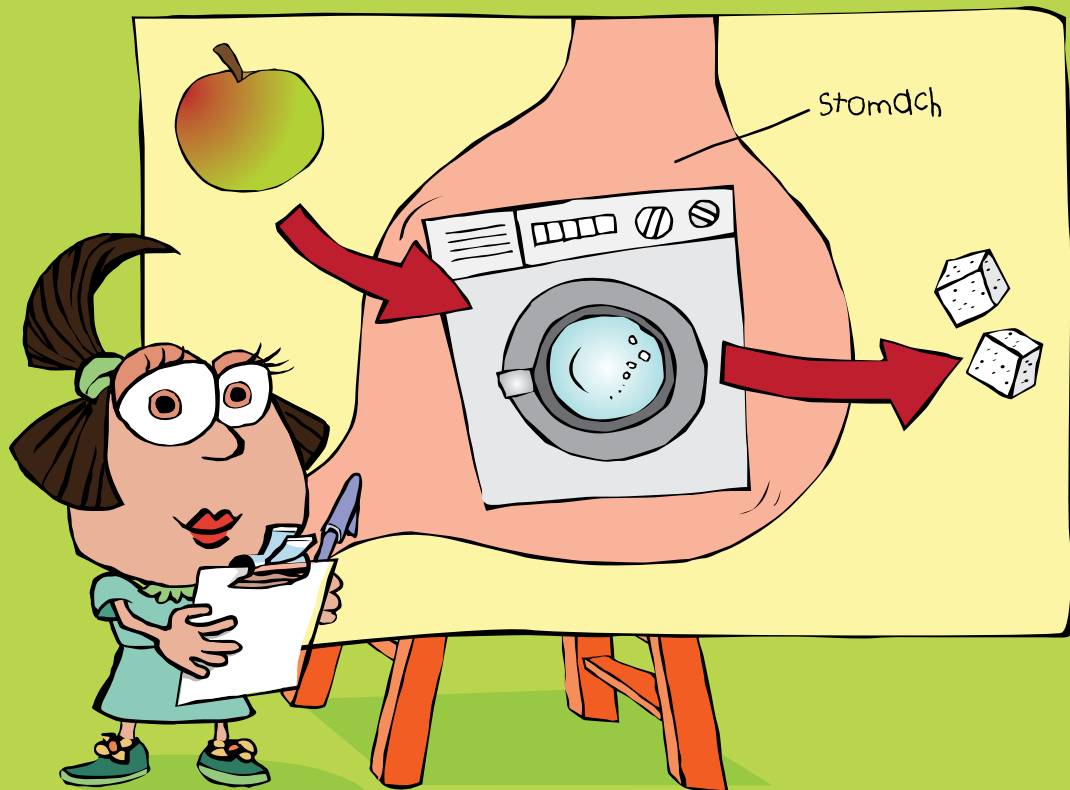
There are millions of cells in our body, so small that you cannot see them with your eyes.

So how does the food we eat get into our cells to make energy?



When we eat food, it gets mixed around in the stomach, a bit like clothes do in a washing machine!

This breaks down the food into sugar. The sugar is then moved into the blood where it is taken around the body to the cells where it is needed.



A special substance called insulin is needed to help move the sugar around.

The insulin works like a school caretaker, opening the doors to the cells that need the sugar.

When there is lots of sugar in the blood, more insulin is made to open the doors of more cells to make energy or to open the store room cells in the liver.

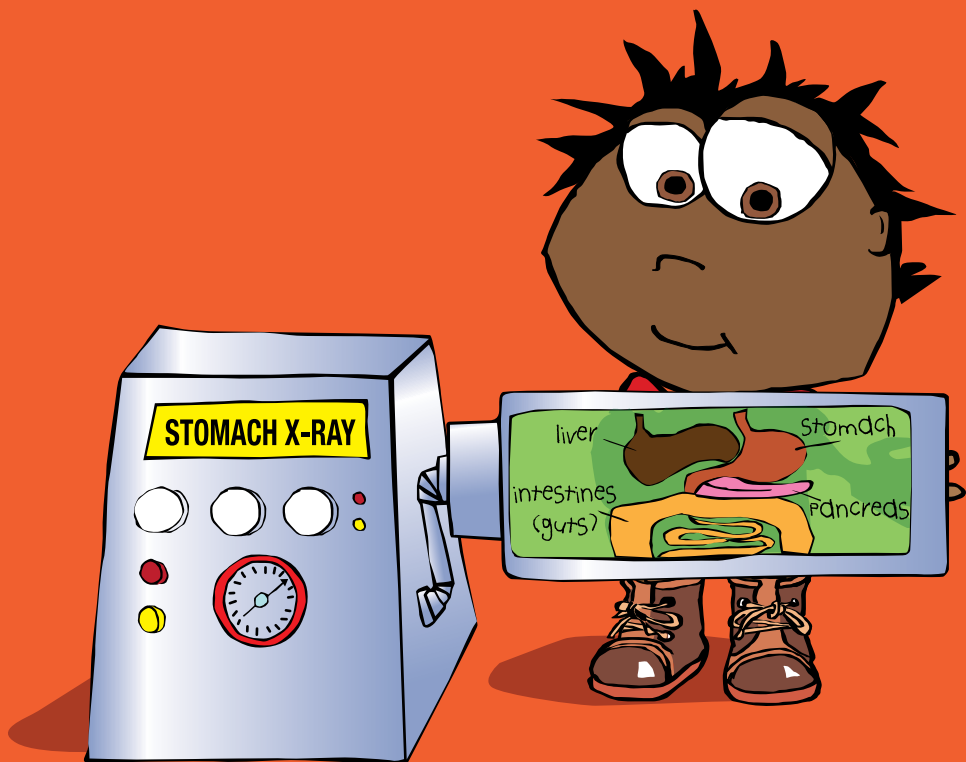




Insulin is made in a special part of the body called the pancreas.

It hides just behind the stomach and does lots of jobs as well as making insulin.

When your body doesn't make enough insulin the sugar stays in the blood and does not go into the cells. This is called type 1 diabetes.



Nobody knows what causes type 1 diabetes.  
However, we do know some things.

We know that you cannot catch it like a cold from anyone. It is not caused by eating too many sweets and it is not because you were naughty or did something wrong.

But, once you have type 1 diabetes, it will not go away.



Having type 1 diabetes means that your blood contains more and more sugar because the insulin isn't there to move it into the cells.

Without sugar, the cells cannot make energy so they become tired and sick. In turn, you may become tired too.

All the sugar in your blood also makes you feel thirsty and want to go the toilet a lot. You might also feel hungry, sick, or just not very well.



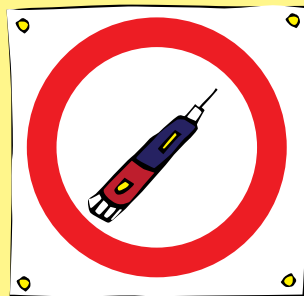
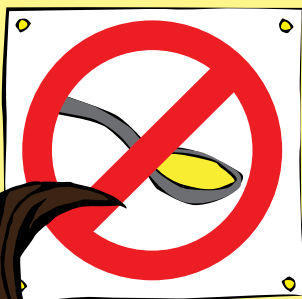
We cannot make type 1 diabetes go away, but we can replace the insulin that your pancreas doesn't make

Every day a person with type 1 diabetes must take this medicine to stop them feeling unwell.

Unfortunately, insulin cannot be taken as a tablet or as a drink because the stomach 'eats' it up before it gets to work.

The only way to have insulin is by a small injection.





A nurse will teach you and your parents how to give you an injection.

It is not like the injections you may get at school or in the hospital. It is a very small needle that you can hardly see. Sometimes you can even use a special 'pen' to do the injection.



Becky uses a special pen for her injections.

It is very important that you have all the injections that the doctor or nurse has said you should do.

It is also important that you do your injections in different places. Doing it too often in one place will mean that the insulin will not work properly and you may get sick.

They can be done in your arms, your legs, your tummy and your bottom.



Cam injects himself in a different place each time.

To make sure you are having enough insulin, it is important to check how much sugar is in your blood. This is called 'blood sugar monitoring'.

These blood sugar results will tell you and your doctor and nurse if you need to change the amount or type of insulin that you are getting. So these tests are very important.



It involves getting a small amount of blood, usually from your finger using a special pen and a special machine called a blood sugar meter.

A small drop of blood is put on a special strip of card and the meter can tell you exactly how much sugar is in your blood!

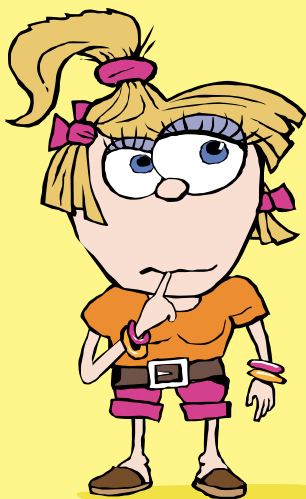
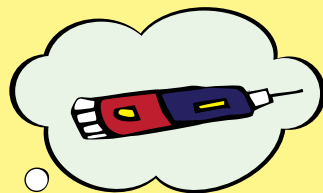
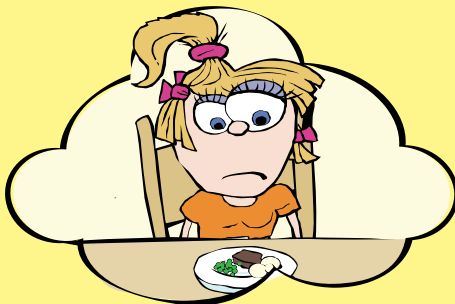
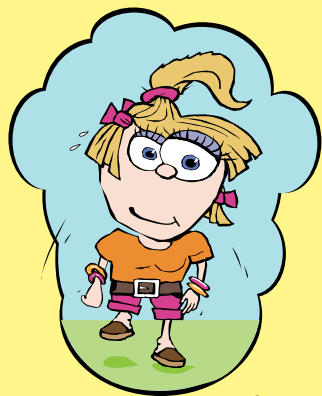




When your blood sugar drops too low this is called a 'hypo'.

This can happen very quickly, usually when you have been running around or not eaten enough food. Sometimes it may also be because you are taking more insulin than you need.

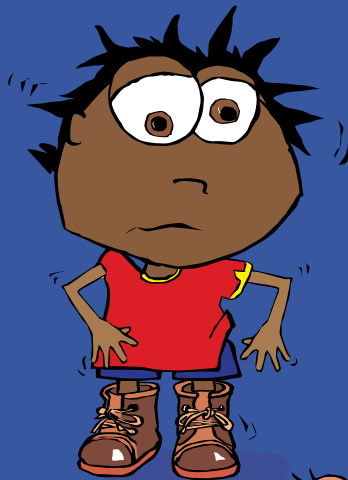
It is important to tell someone when you think you are having a hypo, as they can help stop it getting any worse.



When you have a hypo you may feel shaky or hot. You might also feel dizzy and hungry, or just feel 'funny'.

To stop a hypo you need to eat or drink something sugary, such as a few special sweets or some fruit juice.

When you feel better you should also eat some biscuits or a sandwich to stop your blood sugar level going too low again.



Hypos can happen at any time, so regular testing of your blood sugar is very important.

If you are going to be running around a lot, then you should always have something extra to eat or drink that will give you enough sugar to stop your blood sugar levels dropping too low.

It is always best to carry some sugary things with you too, just in case you have a hypo when you are not at home.



Cam always has a biscuit before he plays basketball

Eating is very important when you have type 1 diabetes.

It is important to eat a healthy diet with lots of fruit, vegetables and starchy foods such as bread potatoes and pasta that will keep your blood sugar steady.

A food expert called a dietician will teach you all about food and how it affects your type 1 diabetes. He or she can also tell you when you can eat sweets, chocolate and cake!



When can  
I eat this?



Sometimes testing your blood sugar will show that it may be higher than normal.

You should always tell someone as they might want to talk to your doctor or nurse about it.

High blood sugar levels can happen for all sorts of reasons. It may be that you are not getting enough insulin or that you've eaten a bit too much food! It can also happen if you are upset or scared about something or if you are ill.



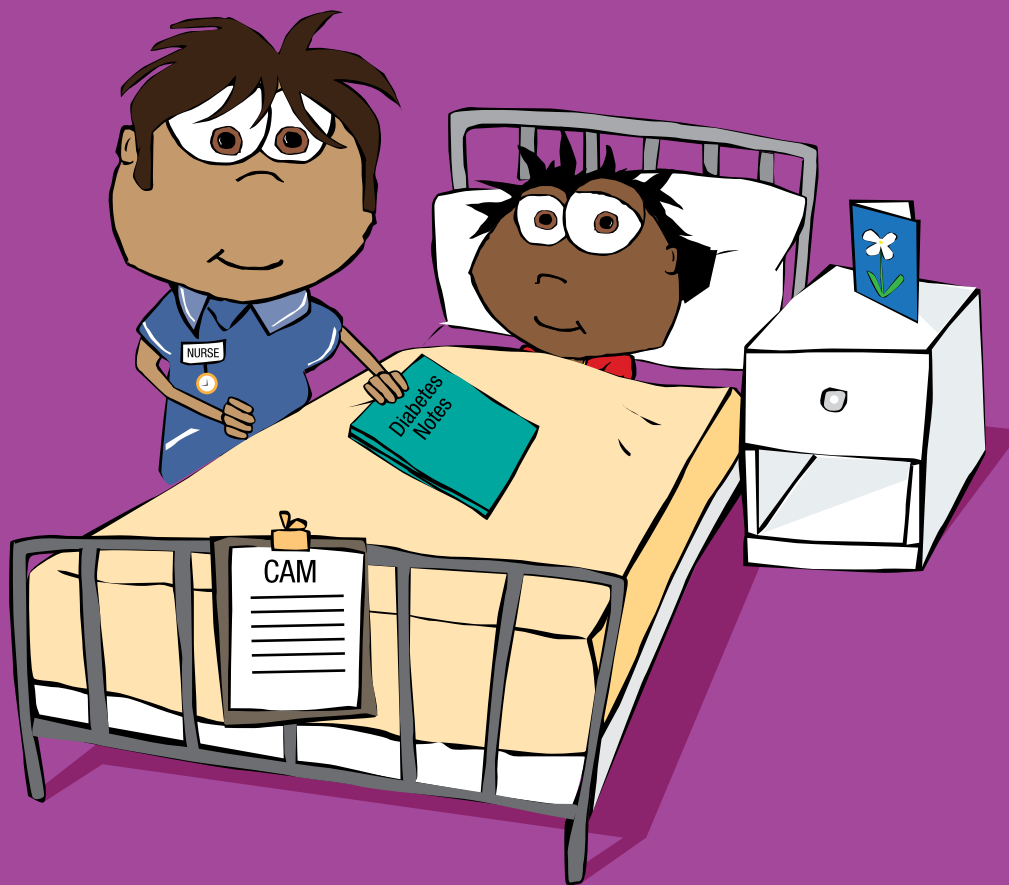
When you are not feeling well, it is important to check your blood sugars and you should never stop your insulin injections - even if you do not feel like eating anything.

You should also check your wee or blood for a special thing called Ketones. These are found when the body does not have enough insulin to move the sugar into the cells to make energy.

The cells try to make their own sugar and energy to stop you feeling tired and unwell. The bits of rubbish left over are called Ketones.



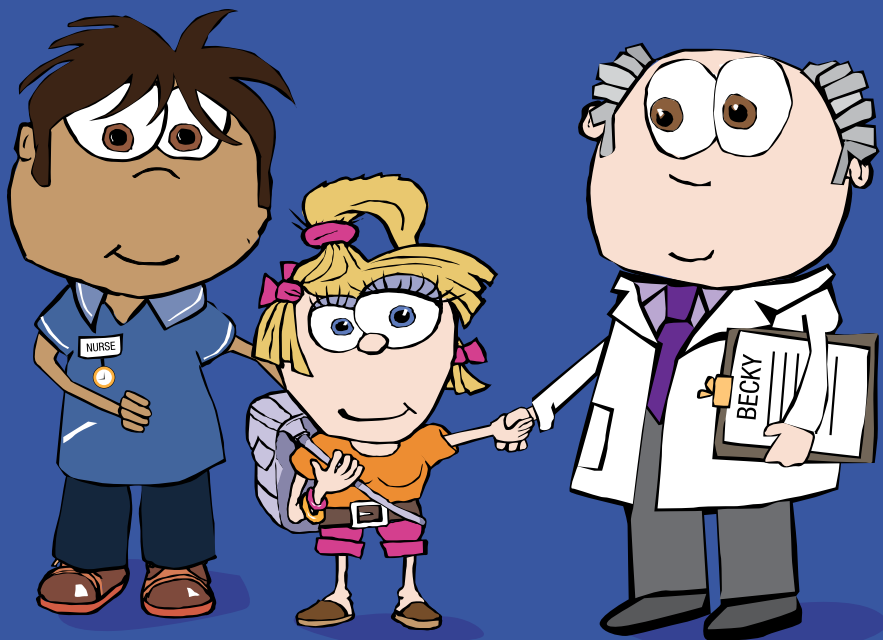
The longer this goes on for, the sicker you may feel. If you start to feel like this you should talk to your diabetes nurse or doctor as you might have to go to hospital for a little while to get better.



Because type 1 diabetes does not go away, it is important to try and have 'good' blood sugars whenever you can. This will help to keep you healthy and stop the problems you might get when you are older.

Visiting your diabetes team at the hospital is very important as they can answer all your questions and make sure that you are keeping your body nice and healthy.





Sometimes you will not want type 1 diabetes and get very angry or upset about it. This is normal and nothing to worry about.

Type 1 diabetes should not stop you from doing anything that you want to do, but it may make you think about it a little more carefully first.

However, you can do anything that your friends can do and it does not make you any different to them.



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