

## Frequently asked questions

### **How is type 1 diabetes different from type 2 diabetes?**

Type 1 diabetes is an autoimmune condition. This means the body's defense system mistakenly targets the cells in your pancreas that make insulin. Type 2 diabetes does not involve autoimmunity. Type 2 diabetes develops due to a range of different factors, such as genetics and age. Many people with type 2 diabetes need to inject insulin.

### **How is type 1 diabetes diagnosed?**

The best way to confirm someone has type 1 diabetes is through a blood test that checks for the presence of autoantibodies. Currently, we know of five autoantibodies linked to type 1 diabetes.

### **What will happen if I don't take insulin (and I have type 1 diabetes)?**

Without insulin your body will break down fat to try and fuel itself. This can lead to a very serious condition called diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA), which can very quickly become a medical emergency.

### **Can I prevent or reverse type 1 diabetes?**

At this stage there is no way to reverse type 1 diabetes. There is ongoing research looking into prevention or delaying the progression of the autoimmune process. However, there is currently no way to prevent type 1 diabetes.

### **If I have type 1 diabetes, can my siblings develop type 1 diabetes?**

There is a risk that brothers or sisters of children with type 1 diabetes may develop the condition if they also carry the diabetes-related autoantibodies. It is possible to screen immediate family members (parents, brothers/sisters or children) of a person diagnosed with type 1 diabetes.

