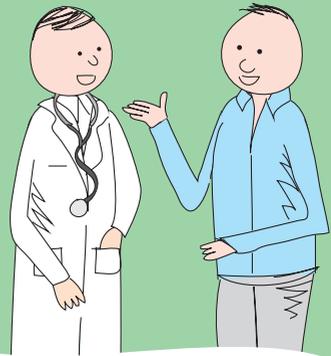


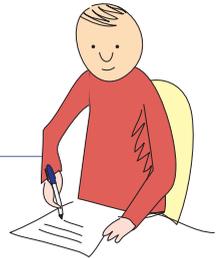
# Patient-Doctor: Let's speak the same language



As a newly diagnosed type 2 diabetic, do you know what to ask your doctor? Consultations can remain challenging even after years of experience with the condition.

This leaflet will give you the tools to help you develop better communication with your doctor. It shows you the benefits of improving this communication.

## The benefits of being active before, during, and after the consultation



### What to do to prepare for your consultation with the doctor

- Keep a record of my blood glucose readings (fasting, after meals, and bedtime) and recent blood pressure checks
  - ➔ *I will bring precise information to the consultation for my doctor*
- Write down any questions/concerns for my doctor and bring them to my appointment
  - ➔ *I won't forget the questions during consultation, they can and will be topics of discussion with my doctor. You can get ideas from the commonly asked questions in this leaflet*
- Prepare a description of my symptoms
  - ➔ *I will be able to communicate them clearly and concisely to my doctor*
- If allowed, take a family member or friend to the appointment
  - ➔ *He/she will remember facts that I could forget*

**“**Over the years, I have realized that the quality of the human connection in a doctor-patient relationship is the foundation of compassionate health care and better clinical outcomes.”

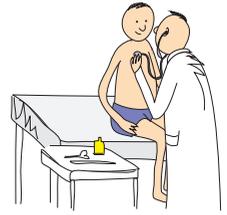


Heather Koga (Zimbabwe)

## What to do or say during your consultation with the doctor

- Discuss any new ways of addressing identified problems

➔ *If I inform my doctor of my problems, I will find an immediate solution with the doctor.*



- Be transparent and stick to the point

➔ *I will get the most appropriate help from my doctor by telling the truth and being precise in my description. The doctor is on my side, not against me*

**“The doctor is there to help me. He/she cannot help me properly, if I don't tell the full story, including the Coke I had yesterday.”**

**Jesper Noerager (Denmark)**

- Discuss the impact of interventions implemented during the last visit (changes in medication/doses/side effect)

➔ *This will help me to see the benefits of decisions previously taken with the doctor and give me confidence and motivation*

- Discuss and seek clarity on what the doctor is telling me or any test results

➔ *This will help me better understand my diabetes and speak the same language with the doctor. Don't forget to use the medical glossary at the end to see the definitions of some technical terms*

- Don't be afraid to ask questions if you don't understand something

➔ *By understanding the advice of the doctor, I will be more confident and motivated to apply it correctly*

- Write down notes of what the doctor says

➔ *These notes will be a good reminder after the consultation*

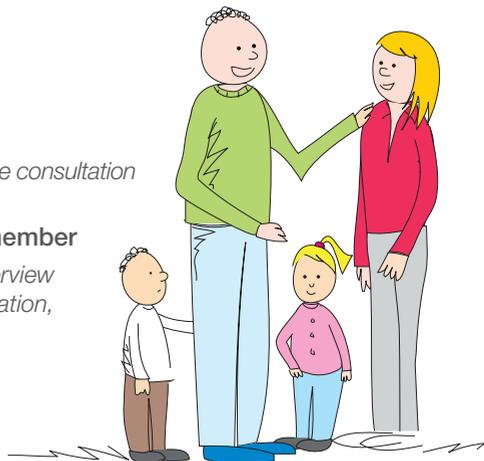
## What to do after consultation with doctor

- Further research on issues discussed

➔ *These notes will be a good reminder after the consultation*

- Sum up the consultation with my family member

➔ *This summary will give me a complete overview of the points discussed during the consultation, even the ones I might have forgotten*



# Commonly asked questions

Living with diabetes can raise a lot of questions from your side on many different topics (treatment, everyday life, diet, etc.). The doctor is there to answer all your questions, even the simplest. His/her answer to each of them will give you a clear view on what to do and will help to better manage your condition. So, don't be afraid to ask your questions!



## Common diabetes-related questions

- Why can't I control my blood sugar?
- What is high or low blood sugar, and how does it feel? What should I do if I feel like that?
- Why is there more than one number for blood sugar levels?
- What could be causing this (complications/symptoms)?
- When should I alert the doctor if symptoms persist?
- What are the costs associated with my chosen treatment regime?
- What are the alternative methods of treatment?
- What are the costs and how effective are they compared with my chosen treatment?
- COVID-19: anything I should know as a person with diabetes?
- COVID-19: can I be vaccinated as normal?

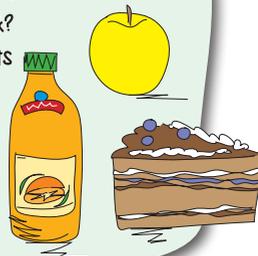


## Type 2 diabetes in everyday life

- Will diabetes affect my sex life? How it can affect my sex life?
- Should I worry about my feet? What are the consequences of diabetes for my feet?
- Can diabetes affect my teeth? Should I worry about my eyes? What other parts of my body can be affected by diabetes?
- What are the side effects of prescribed medications?
- What happens if I do not take my medication for a couple of days?
- Is smoking especially dangerous for a diabetic? If yes, why?

## Diet

- I'm going to a birthday party, can I eat some cake and chocolate?
- What are "hidden sugars"? Does juice count as a sugary drink?
- Can I drink a Coke occasionally? How do "light or diet" products affect my blood sugar levels?
- Can I eat chips/crisps/fruit? If yes, how many/how often?
- I want to fast next week, is it possible?
- Can I drink alcohol? If yes, how much and what is the most appropriate drink for a diabetic?
- Is it okay to have "cheat days"?



# Medical Glossary



Medical terms are often difficult to understand and are obstacles to good communication with your doctors. This glossary with simplified definitions will help you to speak the same language as your doctor.

⇒ **Glycemia:** Commonly known as blood sugar, this biological value indicates the quantity of sugar in your blood when tested.

⇒ **Glycated hemoglobin/HbA1c:** A biological value giving an overview of your blood sugar and its variation during the last 3 months.

⇒ **mmol/L – g/L:** These units measure your blood sugar.

⇒ **Hypoglycemia and its main symptoms:** Usually called a “hypo”, this event occurs when your blood sugar is too low. You can feel tired, experience cold sweats, and feel confused (these symptoms are not exhaustive; symptoms of hypoglycemia can vary according to the intensity).

⇒ **Hyperglycemia and its main symptoms:** Usually called a “hyper”, this event occurs when your blood sugar is too high. You can feel tired, go frequently to the toilet to urinate and be excessively thirsty (these symptoms are not exhaustive; symptoms of hyperglycemia can vary).

⇒ **Insulin:** This hormone reduces the amount of sugar in your blood and can be used as a treatment for diabetes.

⇒ **Glucagon:** This increases the amount of sugar in your blood. It can be used as an emergency treatment when diabetic people are having a severe hypo.

⇒ **Lipids:** Generic terms used to define fats. Lipids can also be used by your doctor to measure your cholesterol rate.

⇒ **BMI (Body Mass Index):** Is a value derived from the height and weight of a person and it is used to estimate a person’s fat level (underweight/normal/overweight/obese).

⇒ **Ketones/Ketoacidosis:** Ketones are blood acids produced by the body when it can’t produce enough insulin. In some conditions like diabetes, these substances can be in high concentration and lead to ketoacidosis which can display the same symptoms as a “hypo” or “hyper”.

*“ I didnt really understand what the doctors were telling me, it was very confusing until we started talking in plain words and language I could understand.”*



Matt Phillips (United Kingdom)

$$\text{BMI} = \frac{\text{Weight (kg)}}{\text{Size}^2 (\text{m}^2)}$$

Learn more about Type 2 Diabetes in everyday life with Diabetes Words App

