



# Diabetes Research & patient experience

## What is Diabetes and what are the types?

**Diabetes:** When the body is not able to make sugar enter the cells and convert to energy so the sugar stays in the blood causing blood sugar levels to be high.

### ▼ Diabetes Types

#### ▼ Type 1 Diabetes

##### Description:

An autoimmune condition where the body's immune system mistakenly attacks and destroys the insulin-producing cells (beta cells) in the pancreas. This leads to little or no insulin production.

##### Causes:

- Exact cause is unknown, but it's believed to involve genetic and environmental factors.

#### ▼ Type 2 Diabetes

##### Description:

A chronic condition where the body either doesn't produce enough insulin or becomes resistant to insulin, causing glucose to build up in the blood. It is more common and usually develops in adulthood, but can also appear in children.

##### Causes:

- Genetics and family history.

- Family history and viral infections may trigger the immune system attack.

### Symptoms:

- Frequent urination
- Excessive thirst and hunger
- Unexplained weight loss
- Fatigue and weakness
- Blurred vision

### Treatment:

- Lifelong insulin therapy (injections or pump).
- Regular blood sugar monitoring.
- Healthy diet and physical activity.
- Education on managing blood glucose and preventing complications.

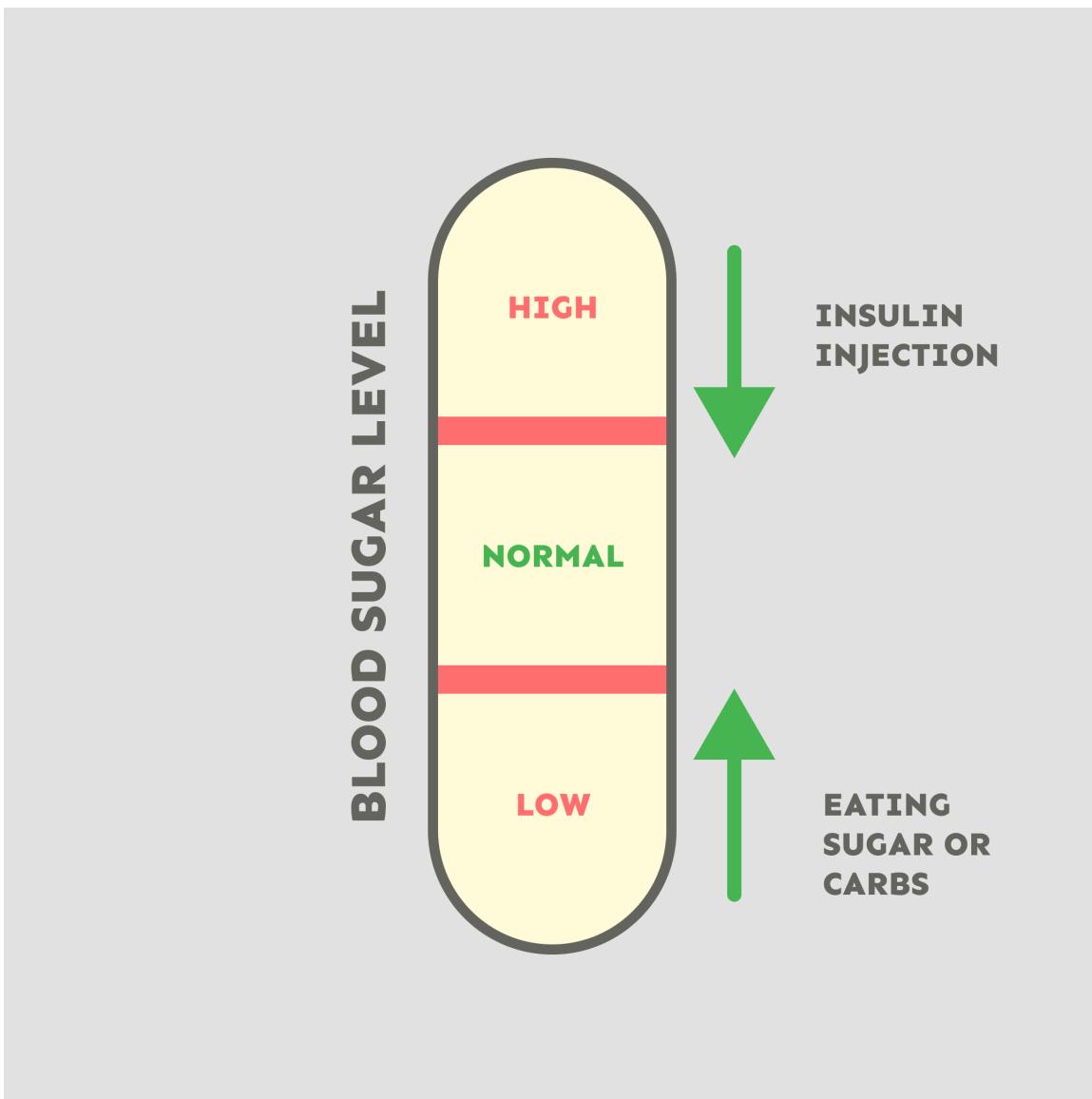
- Overweight/obesity and physical inactivity.
- Poor diet and lifestyle factors.
- Insulin resistance gradually worsening over time.

### Symptoms:

- Frequent urination
- Increased thirst and hunger
- Fatigue
- Slow healing of wounds
- Frequent infections
- Blurred vision
- Sometimes mild or no symptoms in early stages

### Treatment:

- Lifestyle changes: healthy diet, regular exercise, weight management.
- Oral medications (e.g., metformin) to improve insulin sensitivity.
- Insulin therapy if blood sugar isn't controlled by other means.
- Regular monitoring of blood glucose levels.



## Notes about Diabetes patients

### Before Diagnosis

- Most patients mistake the symptoms of diabetes into any other thing such as: Dehydration only, Just normal headache, I am just a little bit exhausted, ...etc. due to the lack of awareness about the symptoms of diabetes or not connecting the dots together
- sometimes it takes a lot between having the symptoms and being diagnosed if patient didn't pay attention to what he is facing

- Sleeping is hard due to the need for dehydration and water need and also the need to go pee a lot

## Diagnosis experience

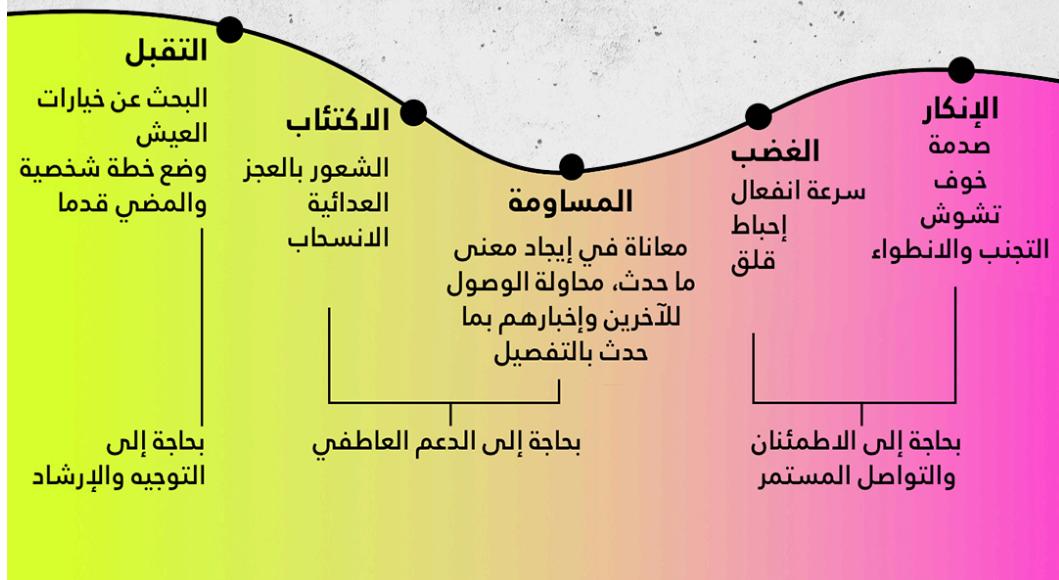
- Being taken to hospital with this sever pain and then going to intensive care is traumatizing for most patients "Especially if they are diagnosed at small age"
- The whole diagnosis experience is an unforgettable sad memory & maybe a trauma
- Many patients hate needles and testing in the hospital
- when going to hospital emergency intensive care, trying to inject a cannula is very hard as the veins are really small and tiny due to dehydration
- This experience is very hard for kids and needs very especial love and care from family and hospital staff to avoid making this a trauma.
- The moment of realization that you have diabetes hits very hard "**especially for type 1 as it is a life long**". Some people freak-out and start crying
- Some people try to deny the fact that they have diabetes "**especially for type 1 as it is a life long**" and try to live without considering it but surely they fail

## First period after diagnosis and Trying to adapt

- After diagnosis hits the patient they enter sadness 5 stages and based on their mental health they can pass the stages aiming accepting and how long will they stay at each stage and order of each stage:

## هذا ما يحتاجه الشخص لتجاوز مراحل الحزن الخمسة

بحسب نموذج طبيبة النفس السويسرية كوبيل روس



- First time of everything is very hard and scary: First time injecting insulin - First time calculating for a meal - etc.
- Type 1 is the hardest and most stressing but type 2 is preventable
- The first period of time after diagnosis is filled with anxiety, stress, emotional issues.
- in this phase, patients are annoyed of having to calculate meals and tracking everything, even some patients describe being diabetic as a full time job with no breaks or vacations
- Everything is related to diabetes: emotions, food, physical activity, weight, pregnancy, ...etc.
- In this phase patients need psychological and physical support
- Psychologists and group therapy or community of diabetic people with experience is important at the very early stages in addition to gowning the

awareness and learning more about diabetes from doctors

- patients are very sensitive at the beginning
- Fear and anxiety must be faced with care, love, empathy and training
- Patients should learn things like: calculating carbs in meals - meal planning - injecting insulin - Using insulin pump - checking blood sugar levels
- Awareness, selfcare and selflove are important for patients in addition to being educated about diabetes
- Accepting diabetes takes awhile to get used to it as a lifestyle not only an illness
- eating becomes a complicated task for diabetes patients as they need to: check their blood sugar before and after the meal, and calculate the meal carbs

## Everyday life with diabetes & dealing with community

- There are a lot of myths and misconceptions about diabetes and mixing between diabetes types 1 & 2
- Community is toxic somehow even when they are trying to help (**same as disable people**)