

**I HAVE
DIABETES.
WHAT NOW
?**

INFORMATION ●

ADVICE ●

SUPPORT ●

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The diagnosis is here: I have diabetes.
But really, what does that entail? What can I do
and how can I get help?

This short guide is here to give you basic information at
the time of diagnosis, as well as to accompany you during
the first steps of your life with this chronic disease.

diabètevaud

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HAVING DIABETES, WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

Having diabetes means the body isn't able to use the sugar provided by food and drinks anymore. Insulin, a hormone produced by the pancreas that transforms sugar into energy for the body, isn't produced in sufficient quantities or is no longer efficient enough. This induces an excess of sugar in the blood (hyperglycemia). Two main types of diabetes exist:

TYPE 1 DIABETES

It is characterized by a major deficit in insulin secretion of immunological origin; it appears most often in childhood or as a young adult and concerns about one diabetic out of 10.

TYPE 2 DIABETES

It is the most frequent form of diabetes (about 90% of cases). It is characterized by a relative deficit and/or a lesser efficiency of insulin and appears later in life, often after 40 years of age. It is strongly linked to lifestyle, mainly physical inactivity and an excess of weight, but also includes a hereditary component.

Symptoms can remain silent for many years, which is why it's important to assess one's risk (<http://www.diabetevaud.ch/testez-votre-risque/>) and if needed, get tested.

GESTATIONAL DIABETES

A third type of diabetes, gestational diabetes, also exists. It appears during pregnancy (in about 10 to 15% of pregnant women) and disappears after giving birth. Gestational diabetes represents an increased risk of developing a type 2 diabetes later in life.

● INFORMATION

SYMPTOMS OF DECOMPENSATED DIABETES



Frequent need to urinate



Weight loss



Excessive thirst



Lack of energy

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO TREAT MY DIABETES NOW?

The excessive sugar levels in the blood keep the body from functioning well and can, with time, damage arteries, causing serious lesions to diverse organs (heart, brain, eyes, and kidneys). It is important to become an actor of your health from now on, so that these complications aren't a fatality!

A good balance of your glycaemia (blood sugar level):

- Improves everyday life with the disease: symptoms of early diabetes decrease (fatigue, thirst, frequent need to urinate, repeated or resistant infections, correcting of blurry eyesight).
- Decreases risks of complications related to diabetes (heart attack, brain stroke, loss of eyesight, amputation, kidney damage).

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AT THE TIME OF DIAGNOSIS

Can I heal?

No, it is a chronic disease. Currently, one cannot cure type 1 or type 2 diabetes. However, for type 2 diabetes, a change in lifestyle (exercise, balanced nutrition, refraining from smoking) can decrease and even stop the need to take medication.

Can I live a long life with diabetes?

Yes, it is thankfully possible to live a very long life with diabetes. However, when compared to a non-diabetic person, diabetes is a supplementary risk factor of complications affecting vital organs like the heart, brain and kidneys, hence the importance of regular check-ups and changes in one's lifestyle in order to reduce the risks to a maximum.

What can I eat?

The first recommendation is to continue eating everything in reasonable quantities, not to skip any meals, to decrease fatty foods (notable of animal origin), and especially to decrease sweet food and to replace soft drinks with water. The terms "glucose", "carbohydrates" and "general sugar" have the same meaning. Dieticians are there to guide you in a personalized manner.

How to live well with diabetes?

One can live very well with diabetes and avoid complications if taken care of adequately from the beginning. Treatment is, in great part, within your own hands. That implies good knowledge of the disease, of one's own reactions, of means of control and of adaptation in everyday life. General practitioners, doctors and nurses specialized in diabetes, and dietitians are at your service to teach you in all of these aspects and to accompany you in these changes.

Will I have to undergo insulin injections?

For type 1 diabetes, the only drug related treatment is insulin. For type 2 diabetes, insulin isn't necessarily needed, but in a number of cases, one has to use it. Insulin is the most natural treatment for diabetes since the pancreas should normally produce it. Insulin has to be administered by injection because when orally ingested, it is destroyed by stomach acids during digestion. The current material allows simple and nearly painless injections.

● INFORMATION

SERVICE REFUNDS

The medical resources concerning diabetes in Switzerland is of very good quality. The vast majority of services are included as part of basic health insurance and will be refunded, that is:

Consultations with your general practitioner or a specialist, nurses focusing on diabetes, and dieticians. **Exception:** foot care done by podiatrists are as of now only refunded by some complementary health insurances. However, specialized nurses can perform check-ups and basic care refunded by the LAMal (basic health insurance). These services are notably provided by the professionals of diabètevaud.

Drugs and material: drugs as well as the entirety of the material used as means of control and for injections are refunded by basic health insurance. However, the health care system will directly charge patients if they don't have health insurance, including patients suffering from chronic diseases such as diabetes.

GET THE HELP THAT YOU DESERVE

What costs the most, from both a human and financial standpoint, are the complications. Handling one's diabetes well is therefore a good investment, but that does cost money. The occurrence of diabetes can be accompanied by **financial difficulties**.

Having a paid job isn't incompatible with receiving financial help when one's salary isn't enough anymore!

Do not hesitate to talk about it to your doctor or to their assistant who will re-direct you to adequate services in your region. You can get information and help from your Regional social center/Centre social regional (or the Social service of Lausanne/Service social de Lausanne, in Lausanne): www.vd.ch/themes/social/prestations-assurances-et-soutien/revenu-dinsertion/a-qui-sadresser/ Information and services to which you are entitled is also available in **the Practical guide/Guide pratique** available online: www.diabetevaud.ch/prestation-des-assurances-sociales/

diabètevaud will gladly answer your questions relating to health insurance contracts and can guide you concerning any question.

DIABETES ONLINE

Nowadays 90% of Swiss households have an internet connection. You can find much research and information about your disease online.

The diabètevaud website contains reliable and up to date information, checked by doctors and health professionals. It contains many useful links as well to understand diabetes and to find services which you will need in the canton of Vaud

www.diabetevaud.ch

To allow diabetic people from Vaud to access a meeting place and a discussion platform online, diabètevaud also has a Facebook page. Following it will allow you to be among the first informed of news surrounding diabetes in the canton (classes, events, new services) and about the life of the association

 www.facebook.com/diabete.vaud

GLYCAEMIA AND GLYCATED HEMOGLOBIN, WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE?

Glycaemia is the level of sugar present in the blood at the time it is measured. Capillary glycaemia is what you measure at the tip of your finger. It is measured in millimoles of sugar by litter of blood (mm/l).

Glycated hemoglobin (HbA1c) is the percentage of hemoglobin (the pigment of red blood cells) on which glucose has fixated itself. It is measured via blood samples analysed in a laboratory. It is linked to the mean value of your glycaemia from the past three months. It gives therefore an indication about the balance of your diabetes over a period of three months.

● **ADVICE**

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HOW SHOULD I MANAGE MY DIABETES?

Diabetes isn't treated like the flu, it is managed over a long period. You are the main actor of your daily care, but you are not alone and many resources exist to support you!

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FAVOR A RELATIONSHIP AND A DIALOGUE WITH YOUR DOCTOR

- See a doctor regularly
- Prepare the consultation by listing your questions
- Dare to question the doctor about all your worries

WHAT AM I RESPONSIBLE FOR?

- **Knowing my disease:** what I need to control (glycaemia, feet, etc.) and at what moment, what are the signals that my body sends me, how to react, etc.
- **Favoring a healthy and balanced diet:** even if that requires an adaptation at the beginning, having a balanced diet and being careful about sugar and fat consumption doesn't mean restricting everything. On the contrary, it is important to eat every type of food knowingly and to have pleasure when having a meal.
- **Exercising regularly:** simply changing one's habits (taking the stairs, walking instead of taking the bus, etc.) or doing more intense exercise, alone or in groups (adapted classes, etc.), there are many ways to move more and regularly.
- **Following my treatments the way the doctor prescribed them to me.**

SERVICES THAT I SHOULD RECEIVE

AT MY DOCTOR

A consultation 2 to 4 times a year (or more if necessary) to see how you are doing, to talk about the management of the disease and to adapt the treatment if necessary:

- Two to four times a year your mean glycaemia via the dosage of your **glycated hemoglobin**.
- At least once a year a **complete assessment** looking at your feet, eyes, kidneys, blood pressure and the level of cholesterol in your blood. It can be necessary to have more frequent check-ups according to the severity of your diabetes and the presence of other risk factors of vascular affections.

BY OTHER HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

In order to help you manage your daily life with diabetes, your doctor can prescribe (or you can ask them to do it) forms of support by specialized professionals:

- **Knowing about your disease:** individual consultations with a nurse specialized in diabetes or a class in a group.
- **Handling your diet:** consultations with a dietician.
- **Having regular exercise:** for example the DIAfit class for type 2 diabetics www.diafit.ch
- **Learning to live a better everyday life with your chronic condition:** EVIVO class www.evivo.ch

GOOD TO KNOW

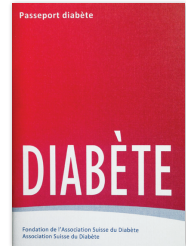
Keeping your blood glucose levels close to normal reduces the likelihood of having complications. In general, diabetes is balanced when the glycated hemoglobin (HbA1c) is equal to or slightly lower than 7% (in some cases, the recommended upper limit can rather be about 8%). If the percentage is higher, especially repeatedly, it can indicate that the treatment isn't adapted to the current situation anymore and needs to be adjusted.

● **SUPPORT**

RECOMMENDED: DIABETES PASSPORT

The **Diabetes Passport** is a notebook in which **medical data** are recorded. It helps better organize and coordinate medical treatments and care that you need as a diabetic person, as well as follow the evolution of your health. Thanks to the Diabetes Passport, you not only get all the necessary information on your doctor visits, but also in case of an urgent treatment, for example in a foreign country.

You can order your free copy of the Diabetes Passport from diabètevaud: 021 657 19 20 or info@diabetevaud.ch



DIABETES IN THE CANTON OF VAUD

The number of diabetic people in the canton of Vaud represents about 6% of the population over 15 years of age, that is to say 40,000 people, or the equivalent of the second biggest city of the canton (larger than Yverdon).

The figure is constantly increasing considering the changes in lifestyle (sedentary lifestyle, unbalanced diet), as well as the ageing population. About 4,000 people are diagnosed with diabetes each year in the canton of Vaud. You are therefore not alone!



DIABÈTEVAUD: THE DIABETIC PATIENTS ASSOCIATION IN THE CANTON OF VAUD

Becoming a member of diabètevaud is an excellent way to keep informed, to receive useful services and to be able to exchange with other diabetic patients. It is also a way to give voice to the patients and to make them recognized as a central actor of the health system.

WHAT ARE YOUR ADVANTAGES AS A MEMBER?

- Free yearly consultation by a specialized nurse (except for foot care)
- Free legal advice
- Offers on classes and conferences (diet, therapeutic education, news...)
- Discussion groups (coffee-exchanges), psychological support, experts patients
- Recreational and athletic activities with other diabetic patients (children and adults)
- Defense and representation of diabetic people's interests
- Information and prevention
- d-journal, french swiss review of diabetes/revue suisse romande du diabète
- website and Facebook page

TO BECOME A MEMBER OF DIABÈTEVAUD

(fee: 70 swiss francs/a year)

Sign up directly on our website www.diabetevaud.ch or complete and return the membership form joined in this document.



BECOME A MEMBER OF DIABÈTEVAUD

Fill in the membership form joined in this document and to return it by mail at:

diabètevaud

Av. de Provence 12 – 1007 Lausanne

Or sign up online www.diabetevaud.ch section “Qui sommes-nous?” then under section “Devenir membre”

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Title (Miss / Mrs / Mr)

Family name

First name

Birth date (dd.mm.yyyy)

Street

Zip code / City

Email address

Phone number

Type 1 diabetes Type 2 diabetes Gestational diabetes

How did you receive information about diabètevaud?

Place

Date

Signature

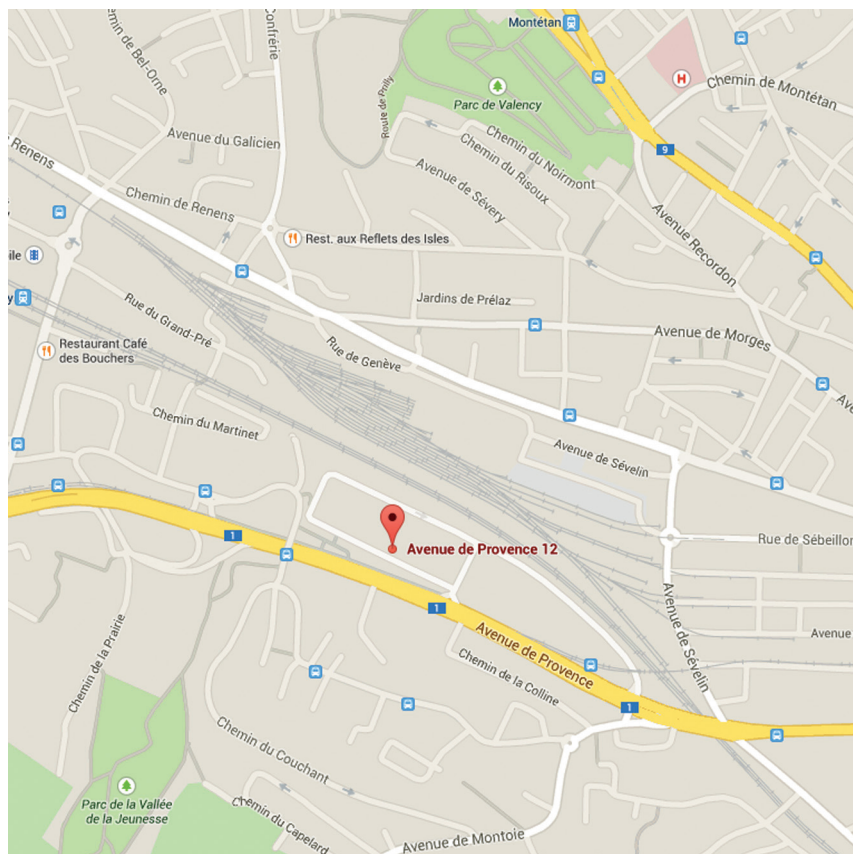


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WHERE TO FIND US

ACCESS PLAN

Avenue de Provence 12
1007 Lausanne



Park places are at your disposal in front of our offices, marked “AVD privé”

Metro M1, station “Provence”

NEED INFORMATION, ADVICE OR SUPPORT? WE ARE HERE FOR YOU.

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www.diabetevaud.ch
www.facebook.com/diabete.vaud

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