

Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus

What is type 2 diabetes?

- A cardiometabolic condition related to obesity and inactivity. Type 2 diabetes is where sugar levels in our blood remain elevated at high levels for too long. If this is not controlled, this can lead to heart disease, kidney damage, nerve damage, and a poorer quality of life.

Is it reversible?

- Yes. Type 2 diabetes, unlike type 1, is a reversible condition. This means there are lifestyle modifications we can make that can not only control our sugar levels, but in fact reverse this condition.

So, what changes can I make?

- Lose weight
 - o This type of diabetes is often associated with being overweight. Therefore, the most important step to take today is to work on fat loss.
 - o This can be achieved through diet or exercise.
- Exercise
 - o Resistance training is one of the best forms of exercise you can do on your journey to reversing diabetes. Resistance training utilises your own body weight, or as you become more advanced, weights, to build muscle. Building muscle allows your body to better respond to the high levels of sugar in our bloodstream. Think squats, pushups, and situps.
 - o Cardiovascular exercise is also beneficial as it can improve heart health, as well as lead to fat loss. Think walking, swimming, running.
 - o If you have been diagnosed with diabetes but are of normal weight, exercise is still beneficial to help reverse this condition. You may wish to focus on resistance training to build muscle.
 - o Remember, start small. Set yourself specific measurable achievable relevant time-bound goals – think SMART.
- Diet
 - o The best diet is the one that you can stick to. This is a lifestyle, not a quick fix. Aim for inclusion and not exclusion.
 - o The Mediterranean diet and the low carb diet, have the greatest benefit for blood sugar control.
- Sleep
 - o Poor sleep can worsen blood sugar control. It can lead to us making poorer food choices and increase our risk of obesity.
 - o Aim for 6-8 hours of good quality sleep.

Other things you can do to help yourself:

- o Stop smoking
- o Get regular check-ups.