

This document contains information regarding prediabetes and:

- Why this has happened
- Lifestyle interventions
- The National diabetes prevention programme – a free service which you are eligible for

Why is this important?

Research shows that **5 - 10%** of individuals with raised sugar levels will **develop type 2 diabetes** annually

It also **increases** your risk of **heart disease** and **stroke**.

With the right support up to **50%** of cases of type 2 diabetes can be **prevented**

Why has this happened?

There are complex reasons for this, but it is mainly due to something called “**insulin resistance**”.

This means that your body is no longer responding normally to sugar, either in the form of **sweets/sugary drinks**, or as easily digestible refined carbohydrates- **potatoes, bread, pasta, rice, chapattis**.

There are three main things that contribute to this:

1. **What you eat:** Being overweight affects the body’s ability to process sugar in the blood.
2. **Activity levels:** Long periods of inactivity (e.g. prolonged work at a desk or sedentary evenings) reduce the ability of the hormone insulin to deal with sugar in the blood. By the same token, **being physically active** increases the efficiency of the insulin.
3. **Your genetics:** people with a genetic risk, either due to their **family history** or their race (**South Asian** or **Afro-Caribbean** heritage), may be naturally **insulin resistant**, even if only a **little overweight**.

Research has shown that the best way to reduce your risk of developing type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease is through **changing your lifestyle**.

The **foods** that we eat and the amount of **activity** we participate in are the **most important** interventions that we can undertake and can have a pronounced effect on our blood sugar levels.

Diet

We should all be eating a **healthy diet**:

- **At least 5 portions of vegetables and fruit (particularly berries and apples- avoid tropical fruit e.g. bananas/pineapple/mango) per day, good fats and lean proteins.**
- **Minimise** our intake of **processed foods, trans fats, sugar** and **refined starchy foods** such as **white bread, potatoes, white rice** and **pasta**.

Some of our patients have found that a low refined carbohydrate approach has worked very well. Please see the websites listed below for further information.

Books:

Michael Moseley's 8 week blood sugar diet

Jason Fung's The Diabetes Code

Useful websites:

<https://www.lowcarbprogram.com/>

<https://www.diabetes.co.uk/>

<https://www.knowdiabetes.org.uk/be-healthier/low-carb/>

<https://phcuk.org/> - Dr Unwin's sugar infographics are particularly useful to look at.

<https://www.dietdoctor.com/> - an American website with good recipe ideas and resources

Local Services

Park Run

There is a weekly 5km run on Saturdays at 9am in Verulamium Park, St. Albans.

Physical Activity

Hertfordshire Health Walks:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/recycling-waste-and-environment/countryside-management/hertfordshire-health-walks/hertfordshire-health-walks.aspx>

Local gym and exercise classes: <https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/sports-and-physical-activity>

Outdoor Gyms

St Albans has outdoor gyms in Verulamium Park,

Diabetes Prevention Programme

<https://preventing-diabetes.co.uk/>

If you would like to discuss anything further please book a routine telephone or face to face appointment with a nurse or health care support worker at the practice

Please see the adjoining link to the leaflet from the diabetes prevention programme. If you are interested in the course, please respond to the text with the word REFER and we can arrange it for you.