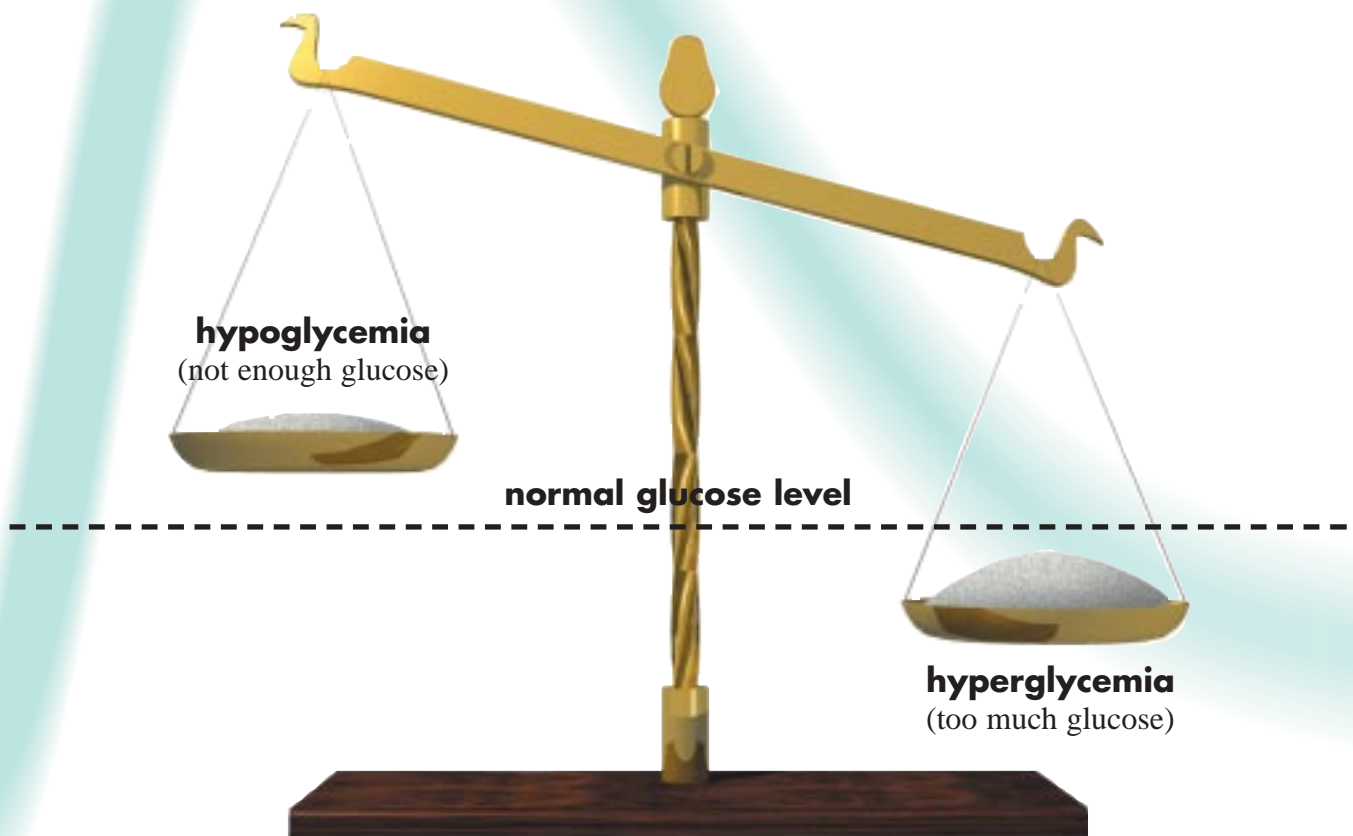


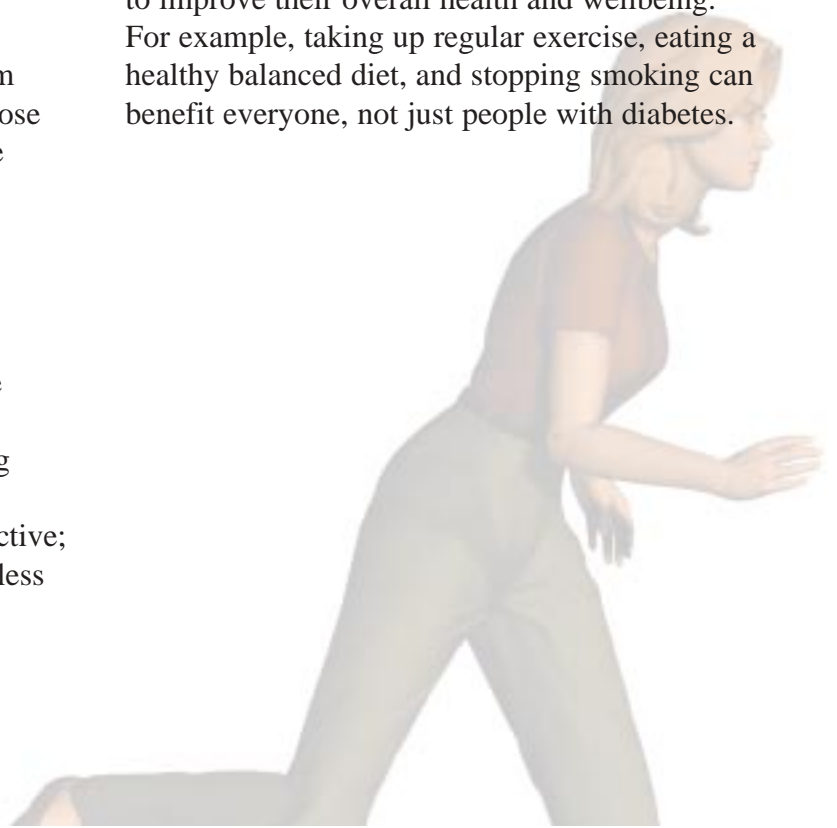
# Goals of treatment and lifestyle issues



For all people with diabetes, the main goal of treatment is to keep the blood glucose level within the normal range, or as close to it as possible for as much of the time as possible. Years of hyperglycemia can lead to long-term complications of diabetes, and too little glucose in the blood — hypoglycemia — can also be dangerous. It is therefore important that the glucose concentration in the blood is kept within a narrow range and does not swing from one extreme to the other.

It is also important that you feel comfortable with the changes that you make in order to control your diabetes. Feeling you are having to make sacrifices and change your lifestyle dramatically can ultimately be counterproductive; it can make you feel resentful and therefore less likely to stick to the changes.

Some of the lifestyle changes that you should make are the same as those that anyone else should make to improve their overall health and wellbeing. For example, taking up regular exercise, eating a healthy balanced diet, and stopping smoking can benefit everyone, not just people with diabetes.



# Goals of treatment and lifestyle issues

Achieving or maintaining a healthy body weight is the first change that you may be advised to make. It is best to develop a weight reduction plan in consultation with a member of your diabetes care team in order to reach your target weight sensibly and with a diet you can sustain long term.

The amount and type of food that you eat affects the level of glucose in your blood. People with diabetes need to ensure they take into account the amount of carbohydrate, protein and fat they eat in their overall meal plan for the day. Your diabetes care team will advise you on when and what to eat, based on your weight, the amount of exercise you do, and the type of medication you are taking. Planning healthy meals may also benefit your partner and your family.

Activity is the most effective method of losing weight or preventing weight gain. It can also help insulin to work more effectively. You should set yourself realistic goals that can be maintained over the long term. For example, getting into the habit of walking instead of taking the bus or driving may be a good starting point. Physical activity not only helps you to lose weight, it also makes you feel better and helps reduce stress. You should choose the type of activity that is right for you and that you enjoy. Some people find that taking up exercise with a partner or friend is useful – encouragement and support can increase your motivation.

