

# Type 1 Diabetes

Diabetes is more than one disease, although in each type high blood glucose is found. The types of diabetes are defined by what has caused the blood glucose to be high. If blood glucose is high, either there is not enough insulin, or the insulin is not working effectively.

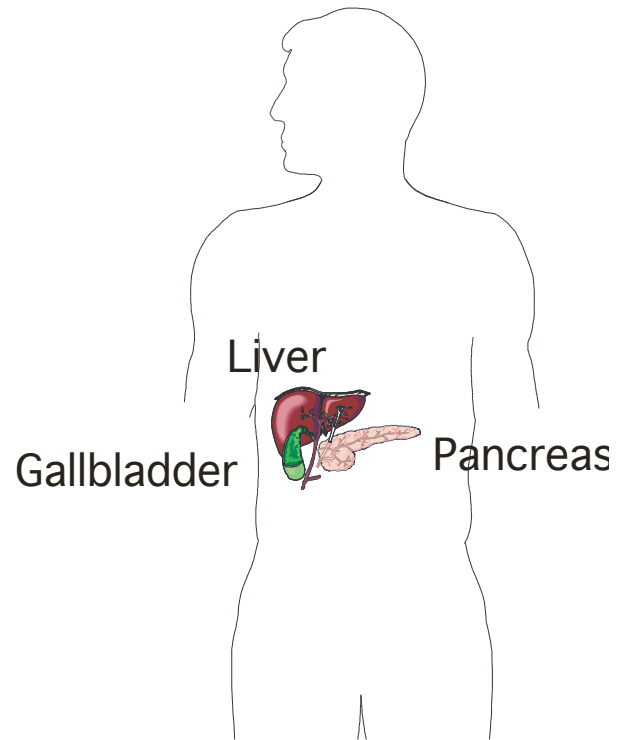
Insulin is a hormone secreted from the pancreas. Insulin helps glucose be used by the cells. In type 1 diabetes the cells in the pancreas that produce insulin have been destroyed.

Most of the time, we don't know what has destroyed the cells in the pancreas that make insulin. Genetics plays a role in deciding whose cells stay healthy and whose pancreatic cells do not. Environmental factors like viruses might also play a role.

Normally when you eat, blood glucose rises, and this causes insulin to be secreted by the pancreas. If the cells in the pancreas that produce insulin are destroyed, then no insulin can be made or secreted. The blood glucose stays high.

The body tries to keep all systems in a balance or at a steady rate, called *homeostasis*. For most people it is the release of insulin that allows the glucose to enter the body cells to provide energy needed for cellular activities. Without insulin, the body cannot control blood glucose levels and death can result. So, people with type 1 diabetes must take insulin injections.

Remember, this information doesn't replace any that your doctor may have given you or spoken to you about. Whenever you have questions about your diabetes or how it is being treated, talk to your doctor.



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