

# What is Diabetes?

LORRIN  
YOU ARE NOT ALONE!

DANIEL  
Of course, they're not alone...  
We're right here!

LORRIN  
No, I mean, they're not alone because they have Diabetes. This affects millions of people every year.

DANIEL  
Millions!?! Is there a cure?

LORRIN  
Unfortunately, there is no cure, but there is treatment. And, after we tell you what is happening in your body, we'll show you how to take care of yourself.

DANIEL  
Look out, Diabetes! Here we come!

LORRIN  
The body is made of trillions of cells (that's a million million) that need energy to function.

DANIEL  
Millions of millions?! That's a lot. How 'bout seven?

LORRIN  
The food you eat is turned into sugar, which is called glucose. And, Glucose travels to all of your cells through the bloodstream.

LORRIN  
Inside your body is an organ called the pancreas.

LORRIN  
The pancreas makes something called insulin which helps all those cells in your body use the glucose.

# What is Diabetes?

DANIEL

Your cells need the glucose to grow and get the power they need.

LORRIN

If you have diabetes, your body has trouble controlling the level of glucose in your blood. Either your pancreas isn't making enough insulin or your cells aren't reacting to the insulin the way they should, so there's too much glucose running around in your blood.

DANIEL

And that's a bad thing?

LORRIN

Yes! Having too much or too little glucose in your blood can damage your heart, blood vessels, kidneys, brain and nerves and cause eye sight that gets worse and worse over many years.

DANIEL

And that's not good! How do we know if we have this?

LORRIN

Some symptoms are excessive thirst, peeing too often, excessive hunger, weight loss, fatigue, changes in vision, slow healing cuts and itching of your skin that goes on and on.

DANIEL

That's a lotta stuff.

LORRIN

That's why it's very important for people with diabetes to take care of themselves.

LORRIN

In some cases, people with diabetes need to take daily insulin shots. Sometimes you can control this disease through diet and exercise and taking medication by mouth. Your doctor can help you with a diet and medication plan so that your blood sugar is regulated.

DANIEL

I know some healthy foods! Fruit, vegetables, whole grains, fish, nuts, beans...

# What is Diabetes?

LORRIN

And you need to exercise too! Getting good exercise really helps your body control your glucose levels.

DANIEL

You can run, swim, skip, hop, bicycle, jump rope, play games...

LORRIN

Just keep your body moving!

DANIEL

Dance!

(We hear music playing)

LORRIN

But, even when you're as active as Daniel, you still need to check your blood sugar level regularly. Your doctor will show you how and, in no time, you'll be able to do it yourself.