# WHO type 1 diabetes guidelines for adults, 2026: key recommendations

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Short answer: the WHO type 1 diabetes guidelines for adults, issued on 14 November 2026, are the organisation's first on diagnosing and managing type 1 diabetes in adults and are designed for all settings, including low-resource and humanitarian ones. WHO recommends multiple daily insulin injections adjusted to blood glucose, says human insulin is an appropriate and effective option, and recommends regular glucose monitoring. It matters for clinicians planning care where insulin analogues, sensors or laboratory tests are not always available.

**TL;DR The short version**

- WHO's guidelines of 14 November 2026 are its first on diagnosing and managing type 1 diabetes in adults, written for all settings including low-resource and humanitarian ones.
- WHO recommends multiple daily insulin injections adjusted to blood glucose, says human insulin is an appropriate and effective option, and recommends regular glucose monitoring.
- Services can use it to plan care where analogues, sensors or laboratory tests are not always available; this summary is not clinical advice.

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## What are the WHO type 1 diabetes guidelines?

WHO released them for World Diabetes Day 2026. Type 1 diabetes is a lifelong condition in which the body does not produce enough insulin, so people depend on daily insulin. WHO estimates that about 9.5 million people lived with it in 2025, with a further 500,000 diagnosed that year, and notes that it increasingly affects adults.

## How the recommendations work in practice

- **Insulin:** injections several times a day, with doses adjusted to blood glucose levels.
- **Insulin type:** human insulin is appropriate and effective; other types can be used when needed.
- **Clinic monitoring:** a regular blood test reflecting average glucose over recent months.
- **Home monitoring:** finger-prick testing or a continuous glucose monitor.
- **Fallback:** where blood glucose testing is unavailable, urine glucose testing can be considered.

## What is new

The novelty is that WHO now has adult-specific guidance on diagnosis and management of type 1 diabetes, written to be usable in emergency and resource-limited settings. National programmes can use it as a reference point when writing or revising local protocols.

## Targets and figures reported by WHO

- The guidance supports the WHO target that all people with type 1 diabetes have access to affordable insulin treatment and blood glucose self-monitoring by 2030.
- WHO says it will provide practical tools and guidance to help countries apply the recommendations and track progress.
- It encourages countries to involve people living with type 1 diabetes in designing, delivering and evaluating programmes.

## Limitations and open questions

- This article is based on the WHO news release. It does not give the strength of each recommendation, evidence certainty, diagnostic criteria, dose targets or monitoring intervals; read the full guideline for those.
- National guidelines, formularies and regulatory approvals take precedence in your practice.
- Access to insulin and testing supplies, not guidance alone, limits care in many places. This is not medical advice for an individual patient. Sources were read on 26 November 2026. Products, rules and standards change, so check the linked originals before you rely on any detail.

## How a service can apply it

1. Obtain the full guideline and assign a clinician to compare it with the current local protocol.
2. List gaps in insulin supply, glucose strips, sensors and long-term glucose testing.
3. Write the fallback plan for supply interruptions, including who is contacted and how insulin is prioritised.
4. Check that adults with new hyperglycaemia are assessed for type 1 diabetes and not assumed to have type 2.
5. Invite people with type 1 diabetes to review the education materials and clinic workflow.

## What it means for physicians and diabetes teams

In well-resourced settings the guideline is unlikely to replace more detailed specialist guidance. Where analogues or sensors are scarce, it offers an official basis for safe care with human insulin and finger-prick monitoring, and for arguing that these supplies are essential. Adult-onset presentation deserves attention at primary care and emergency level.

## Frequently asked questions

- **What do the WHO type 1 diabetes guidelines recommend for insulin?** Multiple daily injections adjusted to blood glucose, with human insulin as an appropriate option.
- **Is continuous glucose monitoring required?** No. WHO names finger-prick testing or a continuous monitor for home checks.

- **When were they published?** On 14 November 2026.
- **Do they cover children?** The release describes guidance for adults.

## Related reading

- WHO guideline on zoliflodacin for gonorrhoea
- AI screening for tuberculosis
- Smartwatch hypertension detection
- TPBOK standard

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### Sources and further reading


1. World Health Organization. WHO issues first guidelines on type 1 diabetes for adults. 14 November 2026. who.int/news/item/14-11-2026-who-issues-first-guidelines-on-type-1-diabetes-for-adults



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