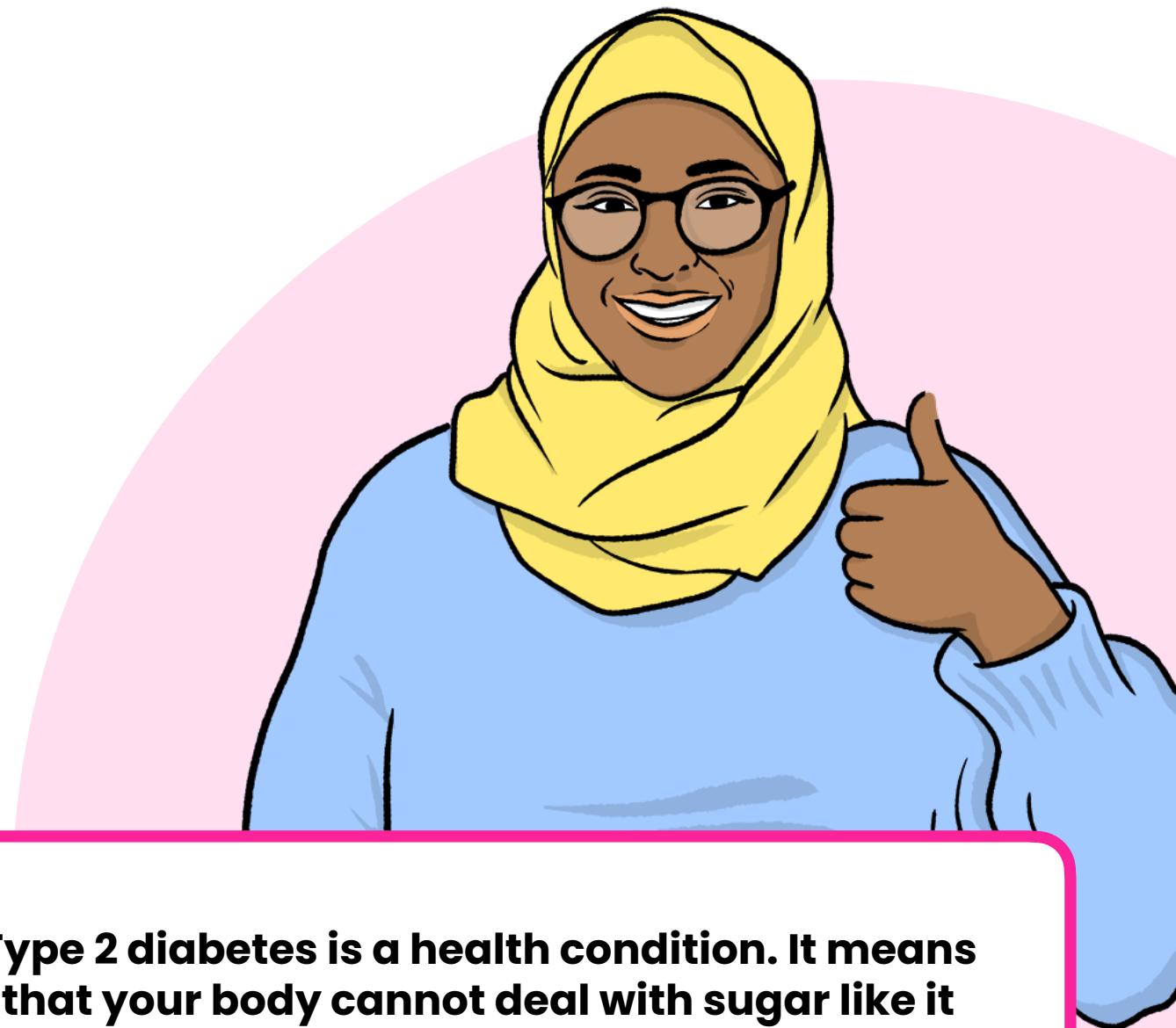


Type 2 diabetes

Among Bengali Women in
Camden



Type 2 diabetes is a health condition. It means that your body cannot deal with sugar like it should.

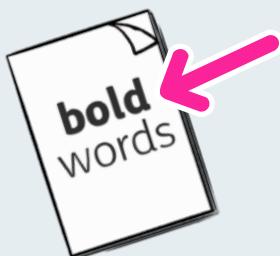
Easy Read



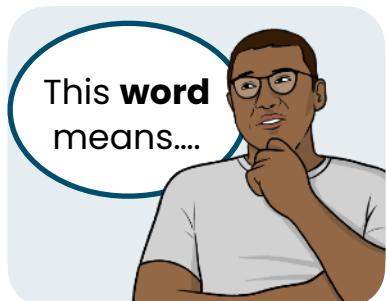
This is an Easy Read version of some information. It may not include all of the information but it will tell you about the important parts.



This Easy Read booklet uses easier words and pictures. Some people may still want help to read it.



Some words are in **bold** – this means the writing is thicker and darker. These are important words in the booklet.



Sometimes if a bold word is hard to understand, we will explain what it means.



Pink and underlined words show links to websites and email addresses. You can click on these links on a computer.

What is in this booklet

About this booklet.....	4
Why we did this project	5
Family	6
Culture.....	10
Exercise.....	14
Health services.....	18
How families and communities can help.....	21
Religion	23
What we think should happen	25
Find out more	27



You can fill in a quick survey to say what you think about this Easy Read booklet: <https://www.easy-read-online.co.uk/easy-read-feedback-survey>

About this booklet

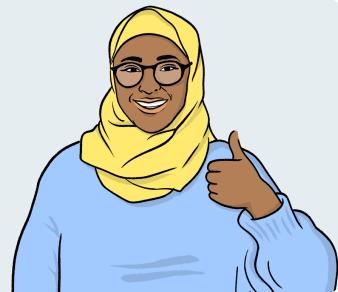


We are Healthwatch Camden.

We check on health services in the local area.



We wrote this report about **Bengali** women with type 2 diabetes.



Bengali people are people whose family comes from Bangladesh or parts of India.



We wanted to find out how health services could be better at supporting them.

Why we did this project



Many people in Camden have diabetes.



People from Bengali backgrounds are more likely to have diabetes than other people.



But many of them do not get the care that they need.



We wanted to learn more about how women from these backgrounds feel about diabetes.



We listened to 61 women with type 2 diabetes.

Family



Many women told us that their diabetes has affected their whole family.



They have had to change what they eat.



Some women said their families supported them with this.



Women said that they sometimes felt tired, dizzy and weak because of diabetes.

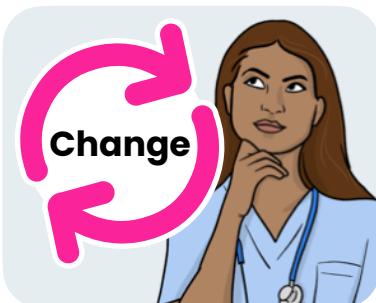
Feeling worried



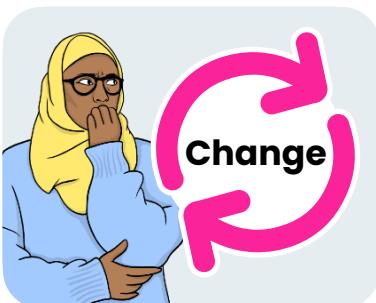
Many women felt worried and scared about their diabetes.



Many knew people who had become very ill because of diabetes.



But people with diabetes need to make big changes to their lives so that they can stay healthy.



If people feel scared, this can help them to make those changes.

People who do not understand diabetes



Some people think that diabetes comes from being greedy.



This means that some women do not want to say that they have diabetes.



They are worried that others will think they are unhealthy people.



But other things, like their genes, can cause diabetes too.

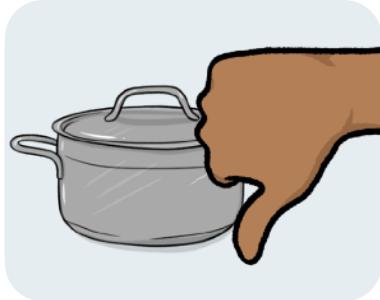
Cooking for others



Bengali women often do a lot of cooking for others.



But diabetes means that they need to make big changes to what they eat.



So they cannot always eat what they cook.

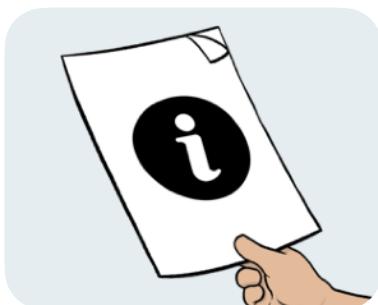


Some said that they wanted more help with cooking and other work in the house.

Culture



Culture means the way groups of people live their lives, like their food or religion.



People told us that they needed more information about food in a language they could understand.



This could include videos and leaflets in Bengali.



They also wanted to learn more about healthy Bengali food.

Rice



Many Bengali people eat a lot of rice.



But people with diabetes should not eat too much rice.



Women said that they did not want to give up eating Bengali food, like rice.



They said that it would be useful to find ways of cooking it in a healthier way.

Spending money on food



Many people said that healthy food can cost a lot of money.



It is much easier and cheaper to cook big meals if you have a big family.



But many women have to cook a different meal for themselves because of their diabetes.



Many women asked for advice about cooking healthy food without spending too much money.

Events



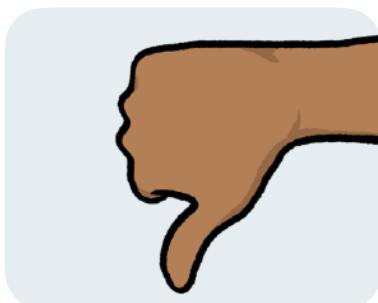
Many women go to big events like Eid and weddings.



At these events, people often eat a lot of unhealthy food.



People worry that they are being rude if they do not eat.



But their diabetes means that they cannot eat as much.



This can mean that they feel left out or like people do not like them.

Exercise



Many women said that they found it hard to get exercise.



This was because of things like:

- They did not have enough time.



- They could not afford to go to a gym.



- It was not easy to get to places like gyms.

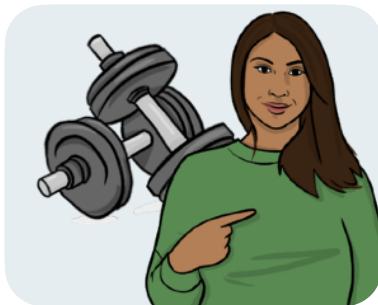


- Other health conditions that make it hard to exercise.

Private places



It is very important for many women to have places to exercise that are only for women.



These could include swimming sessions or gym classes that are only for women.



If they cannot exercise in places that are only for women, then they might not exercise at all.

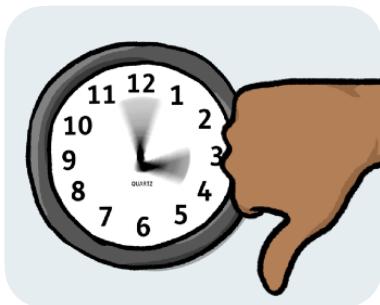
Time



Women told us that they have to spend a lot of time looking after their families.



People expect them to look after others before they care for themselves.



This means that they do not have time to exercise.

Being a woman



Some women did not want to exercise in public because of what other people would say.



This is because some cultures do not like women or older people exercising in public.

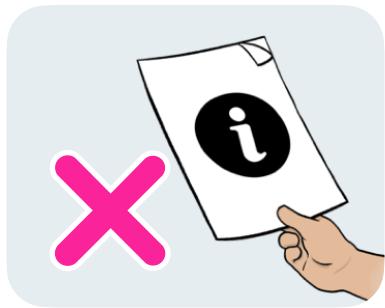


Most women said that walking was their favourite type of exercise.



But they said that there were not enough places like parks where they could go to walk.

Health services



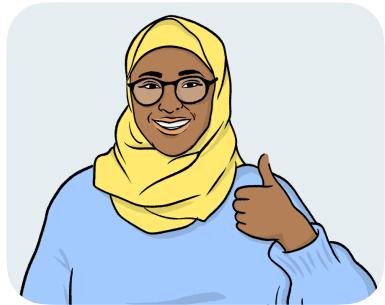
Health services often do not give advice that is right for Bengali women.



Sometimes they say that women with diabetes should eat brown rice and salad.



But it would be better to give women ways to make Bengali food more healthy.

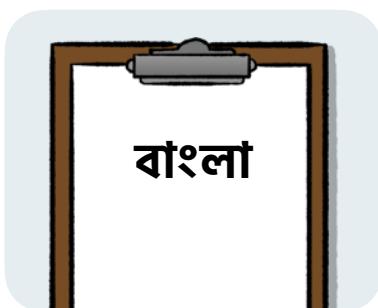


This would make it more likely that women stick to their new ways of eating.

Language and culture



Many women said that it was hard to understand what health services were talking about.



They wanted more:

- Information in Bengali.



- Pictures that show how much they should be eating.



- Bengali cooking classes.



Sometimes, health services do not understand enough about Bengali people.



If staff in health services learn more about Bengali people, they would be better at helping them.



A lot of Bengali women did not know about the support that they could get.

How families and communities can help



Women with diabetes need support from the people around them.



But not all women felt like they got enough help from their families.



Some women said that their husbands and children helped a lot.



They said that they all started eating healthier food together.



Other women said that they did not get enough support from their family.

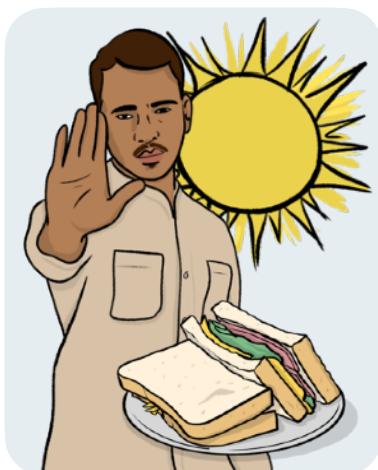


This was because their family did not understand enough about diabetes.

Religion

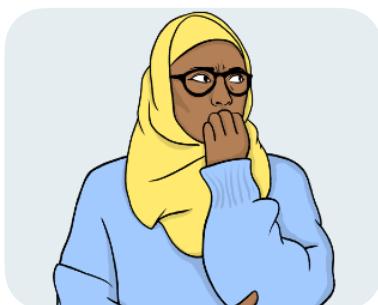


Many Bengali women are muslim.



Part of being muslim is following **Ramadan**.

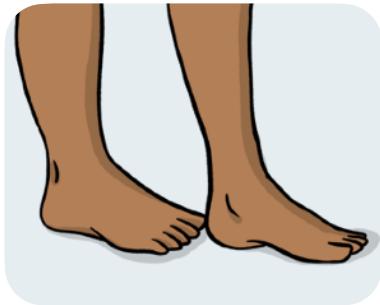
Ramadan is a month each year when muslims do not eat during the day.



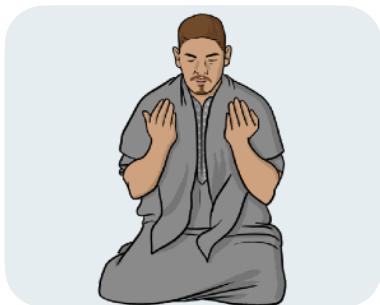
Ramadan can be difficult for people with diabetes.



Women told us that they need more advice from health services about what to do during Ramadan.



Many people with diabetes have problems with their feet.



People told us that they take their shoes off when they pray.



Diabetes can make this more difficult for them.

What we think should happen



Health services could be better at supporting Bengali women with diabetes.



They should:

- Help them learn to cook Bengali food that is healthy and good for them.



- Make it easier for Bengali women to get support from their services.



For example, they could have more services that women can go to that are only for women.

Health services should also:



- Move services to local community centres that people trust.



- Help women's husbands and children to learn more about diabetes.



This will help them to understand how to help.

Find out more

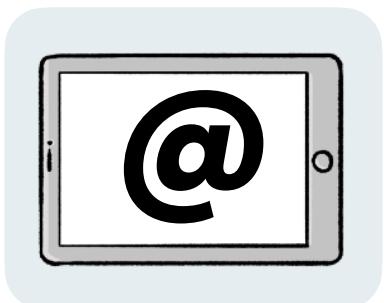


You can look at our website here:
www.healthwatchcamden.co.uk



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