

DIABETES INFORMATION SHEET

Diabetes is a lifelong condition that causes a person's blood sugar level to become too high. When food is digested and enters your blood stream, your body is unable to break down the sugar into energy. This is because either you don't have enough insulin (Type 1 diabetes), or the insulin produced doesn't work properly (Type 2 diabetes)

Why should I attend my diabetic review?

If diabetes is not treated it can lead to a number of different health problems. High glucose levels can damage blood vessels, nerves and organs leading to health problems including heart attacks, strokes, visual impairment, kidney disease and foot problems. Even a mildly raised glucose level that does not cause any symptoms can have damaging effects in the long term.

Your review appointment is a regular opportunity to discuss changes to your lifestyle and treatment, which will help to control your diabetes and reduce your risk of developing complications. You can also raise any questions or concerns you have about your health and medication.

What will happen at my appointment?

The nurse will discuss your condition with you and ask specific questions to find out if you are having any problems. She will ask about your lifestyle and your medication and check your height and weight, along with your blood pressure. You may also have an examination of your feet and some blood tests performed. She will then be able to advise you about any changes she would recommend. On an annual basis you will also have a follow up appointment with the doctor.

What lifestyle changes will help me?

- Stopping smoking. You can get help and support from 0800 052 5855 and www.smokefree.nhs.uk
- Eat a healthy balanced diet high in fibre, fruit and vegetables and low in fat, salt and sugar. www.prescription4exercise.com
- Increasing your regular exercise if needed. Advice can be obtained from
- Weight loss if your BMI is greater than 25
- Reducing your alcohol intake to 14 units a week for women and 21 units a week for men. For help and support contact 0300 555 5999 and www.bdaat.co.uk

What tests may help me?

- Measurement of HBA1C – this gives an idea of how well your diabetes is controlled. Better control reduces the risk of complications.
- Cholesterol measurement – having diabetes is a risk factor for cardiovascular disease. High cholesterol is a second risk factor.
- Blood pressure measurement – good blood pressure control helps to reduce the risk of complications from diabetes.
- Kidney function testing – diabetes can affect the kidneys.
- A urine test looking for protein.

What medication may help me?

- There are many oral medications that help to lower blood glucose levels such as Metformin, Gliclazide and Sitagliptin.
- Insulin and other injectable therapies may be used
- Statins to lower cholesterol and reduce cardiovascular risk e.g. simvastatin, atorvastatin
- Ace inhibitors lower blood pressure and can help to protect the kidneys e.g. Ramipril, Lisinopril.