

Diabetes – what care you should receive

If you or someone you know has diabetes, there's a minimum level of care that every person deserves and should expect from their health service. Getting all the checks, seeing the right healthcare professionals and understanding your diabetes are all essential in helping you manage your condition. **Use this checklist to make sure you're getting all the care you need.** If you aren't, take it to your diabetes healthcare team and raise the issue with them.

- 1 Get your blood glucose levels measured** You should have an annual HbA1c blood test to measure your overall blood glucose control. Although there are recommended targets, no two people with diabetes are the same and your target should have been agreed by you and your diabetes healthcare team.
- 2 Have your blood pressure measured** You should have your blood pressure taken and recorded at least once a year. There are recommended targets but you should have a target that is right for you.
- 3 Have your blood fats (cholesterol) measured** You should have an annual blood test to measure your cholesterol level. Like blood glucose and blood pressure, you should have your own target that is realistic and achievable.
- 4 Have your eyes looked at** You have the right to have your eyes screened for signs of retinopathy every year. Using a specialised digital camera, a photo of your eyes is taken and then examined by a specialist who is looking for any changes to your retina (the seeing part at the back of your eye).
- 5 Have your legs and feet checked** The skin, circulation and nerve supply of your legs and feet should be examined annually. If there is any risk to your limbs, you should be referred to a podiatrist or specialist foot clinic.
- 6 Have your kidney functions monitored** You should have two tests for your kidneys each year. A urine test checks for protein – a sign of possible kidney problems – and a blood test measuring the rate at which blood is filtered by the kidneys.
- 7 Have your weight checked** You should be weighed and have your waist measured to see if you need to lose weight.
- 8 Get support if you are a smoker** You should receive advice and support on how to quit. Having diabetes already puts people at increased risk of heart disease and stroke, and smoking further increases this risk.

- 9** **Receive care planning to meet your individual needs** You live with diabetes every day so you should have a say about every aspect of your care. Your yearly care plan should be agreed as a result of a discussion between you and your diabetes healthcare team, where you talk about your individual needs and set targets.*
- 10** **Attend an education course** You should have the chance to attend an education course to help you understand and manage diabetes. There are courses for Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes, such as DAFNE, DESMOND, X-PERT and DYFFD.
- 11** **Receive paediatric care if you are a child or young person** You should get care from specialist diabetes paediatric healthcare professionals. When the time comes to leave paediatric care, you should know exactly what to expect so you have a smooth change over to adult health services.
- 12** **Receive high quality care if admitted to hospital** If you have to stay in hospital, you should still continue to receive high-quality diabetes care from specialist diabetes healthcare professionals, regardless of whether you have been admitted due to your diabetes or not.
- 13** **Get information and specialist care if you are planning to have a baby** Having a baby means that your diabetes control has to be a lot tighter and monitored very closely. You should expect care and support from specialist healthcare professionals at every stage from preconception to post-natal care.
- 14** **See specialist diabetes healthcare professionals** Diabetes affects different parts of the body. To help you manage your diabetes, you may need to see or be referred to specialist professionals such as an ophthalmologist, podiatrist or dietitian. Diabetes UK believes that you should have the opportunity to see a specialist if and when the need arises.
- 15** **Get emotional and psychological support** Being diagnosed and living with diabetes can be difficult. You should be able to talk about your issues and concerns with specialist healthcare professionals. Being happy as well as healthy is really important.

Go to diabetes.org.uk to complete our care survey and find out more.

**Call the Diabetes UK Careline on 0845 120 2960
for support and information.**



*If you live in Northern Ireland, care planning is different. Talk to your diabetes healthcare team.