

DIABETES MANAGEMENT

PROGRAM

Diabetes is not just about day to day sugar control. Diabetes is a condition that can seriously damage organs of your body and reduce life expectancy and quality if not properly controlled.

It is the commonest cause of blindness in the Western world.

It is the commonest cause of kidney failure and people needing dialysis.

It significantly increases risks of heart attacks and strokes and other vascular disorders.

It may cause impotence and affect nerves anywhere in the body causing loss of sensation or function.

At our surgery we offer regular monitoring to ensure that modifiable parameters are properly controlled and regular advice is available.

Care is shared between doctors and the specialist nurse. It is advisable for all those with diabetes or impaired glucose tolerance to see the specialist nurse at least once a year. The doctors are always on hand to give their expert advice.

**Careful diabetes control
has been shown to reduce
complications**

FACTORS TO CONTROL

- **Blood Sugar**
- **Smoking**
- **Weight**
- **Blood Pressure**
- **Cholesterol**
- **Exercise**

Blood Sugar

All the major studies have shown that tight blood sugar control reduces the chances of diabetic complications.

Finger prick testing measures your blood sugar at any given time. This varies throughout the day according to your calorie intake and your metabolic use of those calories.

We recommend six monthly measurements of HbA1C as an indicator of your sugar control. It depends on the ambient level of blood sugar over a period of time. It is a good predictor of diabetic complications. The target level to minimize chances of complications is 7.0%. For every 1% above 7 there is a 30% increase chance of diabetic complications. If this cannot be achieved by diet and weight loss alone then medication is advised.

Smoking

If you have diabetes smoking is the single biggest risk factor that you or we can change. If you need help in giving up we run smoking cessation clinics to help you, just ask at reception.

Impaired Glucose Tolerance

Some people have an impaired glucose tolerance. Their blood sugars run high after meals but are normal when fasting. Although they are not technically diabetic or require blood sugar control, they also have a higher risk, particularly vascular complications such as heart disease. Over 10 years half will become diabetic and we advise an annual glucose tolerance test in addition to blood pressure and cholesterol monitoring to exclude this.

Weight

The commonest type of diabetes (type 2) is caused by resistance to insulin. Insulin resistance has been shown to be related in many cases to being overweight. By reducing weight diabetes can not only be controlled more easily but in some cases reversed. If overweight, a reduction has been shown not only to improve diabetes, but reduce blood pressure and increase life expectancy.

Blood Pressure

If you have diabetes it is particularly important to keep your blood pressure under control. Keeping blood pressure below 140/90 reduces heart attacks, strokes and kidney damage. In some respects the lower the blood pressure the better. This should be monitored six monthly

Raised Cholesterol

In diabetes cholesterol should be maintained below 5. In fact it has been shown that taking statins (cholesterol lowering medication) benefits people with diabetes whatever their cholesterol levels.