



**Wolverhampton
Diabetes Care**

Responsibilities for diabetes care. What care to expect and how to prepare for a consultation?

People with diabetes should expect to get the best of care to keep them in good health.

In order to do this, the health service should provide them a regular package of care, monitor the situation to keep things under check and to make any changes to treatment or care plans to keep things as well controlled as possible. This is important in reducing the chances of developing the serious health problems or complications linked to diabetes, such as heart disease, kidney disease and blindness.

An important part of this is being sure that everything is explained so that you know what is going on and it helps your medical team if you understand what should be done, what needs to be done and what is going on.

It is important to be well prepared so that you can make the most of your visits.

Who is responsible for your diabetes care – you or your diabetes team?

Effective diabetes care is achieved by teamwork, between you and your diabetes care team.

Looking after your diabetes and changing your lifestyle to fit in with the demands of diabetes is hard work. The more you know about your own diabetes, the easier this will become. This means that the responsibilities for your care must be shared by yourself and your diabetes team.

What are your responsibilities?

Your responsibility is to care for and be in control of your diabetes on a day to day basis as far as you are able to. This includes:

- learning as much as you can about diabetes and how it affects you

- being in control and taking charge of your diabetes yourself as much as possible
- following a healthy lifestyle, including choosing healthy food, controlling your weight, taking regular exercise, not smoking and drinking only in moderation
- monitoring yourself and knowing how to deal with changing your treatment in line with the results if appropriate
- taking your medication and treatment as agreed with the team or being frank and honest if you don't or can't do that
- being sure you get your regular checks done, especially your laboratory blood and urine tests, your weight and blood pressure, your eye and foot examinations
- keeping your appointments
- to be prepared for appointments by bringing your medication, your self-monitoring records and by making a list of points that you need answers to.
- to know how and when to seek help from your healthcare team, especially in an emergency
- being open about your concerns and worries with your care team
- thinking about letting those around you (friends, families and employer) know that you have diabetes and involving them if needed

How to be prepared for your consultation?

You should make the most out of your consultation - so be prepared. Feel free to ask questions.

Be sure to inform yourself about diabetes and especially how it affects you. By being prepared, knowing about diabetes and asking questions that way you will be able to have a discussion with your diabetes team from which both of you will learn and both of you will gain.

Remember the practicalities; have any blood tests done that were requested in advance, bring an early morning specimen of urine, bring all your diabetes equipment – the blood glucose meter and monitoring diary, and don't forget a full list of your medication.

Can I discuss my problems?

The review should provide you enough time to discuss your general wellbeing, how you are

coping with your diabetes at home, work, school or college; your home monitoring results and hypos and any problems you may be having. This should include discussion about smoking, alcohol consumption, stress, sexual problems, physical activity and healthy eating issues. You should feel free to raise any or all of these issues with your diabetes care team.

What will I be told about changes to my care?

If any aspect of your care is due to change, you should be told about it. Similarly, if you need to go into hospital if your treatment is changing; your diabetes team should go through the reasons for this and the balance of the benefits and risks with you.

What should happen at your regular checks?

These may vary according to your particular needs but should include, at least annually:

- a check on your eating, exercise and smoking habits
- a check on your weight, blood pressure, cholesterol, your vision and eyes (with dilated pupils), your feet and your kidneys.
- a check on your overall risk of circulation problems
- a review of all of your treatment
- a check on your self- monitoring
- a regular review of your targets and any necessary changes
- discussion about any problems and questions you may have
- continuing and updated education on diabetes as needed for either you or your important family and carers.
- a clear treatment plan to take you through to your next visit.

Your treatment plan and self-care targets

The healthcare team should be working with you to draw up a treatment plan for your diabetes that suits your lifestyle and your individual needs. This should include:

- personalised advice on eating
- types of foods, amounts and timing of meals
- advice on physical activity

- diabetes control including assessment of hypoglycaemia
- details of your dose and timing of diabetes tablets or insulin and how to take them
- advice on how to change insulin and diabetes tablet doses based on the results you get by monitoring your blood glucose levels.
- advice on other treatments such as for blood pressure and cholesterol
- an explanation of any treatment changes that are needed
- your individual target values for blood glucose levels, blood fats, blood pressure and weight
- an explanation of your current state of health and of whether you have any complications
- short term and long term treatment goals
- an explanation of any other services that are needed to deal with your health problems such as referral to nurses, dietitians or other specialist services

What other things can I be expected to be informed about?

As well as having full information about your personal health and medical problems as you need it and to your satisfaction, you have a right to know and be told many other things including:

- what diabetes services and resources are available locally
- who is providing your diabetes care
- their roles and responsibilities
- who to contact if you need information, support and advice
- how you can meet other people with diabetes through your local diabetes group
- what you should do if you are not receiving appropriate healthcare

Seeking advice and what care to expect?

You should come to feel as much in control and in command of your diabetes as you feel able to do and the health service should help you do that.

In order to achieve this, the diabetes services have a responsibility to open, honest and fair with you, to provide you with education and training, to give you information, to be clear about what the problems are, to plan your care with you and to make you feel involved in your own management.

The diabetes care team will help you get the most for your health by keeping a regular check on your health.

During your appointments you can expect the team to discuss your lifestyle and try to resolve any issues that might be affecting your control. They should thoroughly review your diabetes control, blood pressure control, circulation risk, and examine you for complications. They should explain the results of any tests that you have had without using jargon. They should provide you with on-going education about your diabetes. They will be there to answer your questions and inform you of any changes in your care. They should discuss possible future developments in your condition, such as complications. They should give you a clear picture of what the plan is to keep you healthy.

As part of this partnership, you to have a responsibility to value your health by being as self caring as you can and to do as well as you can in looking after your diabetes.