

THE CARE YOU SHOULD RECEIVE

DiABETES UK
CARE. CONNECT. CAMPAIGN.

15 HEALTHCARE ESSENTIALS

Having the right care is essential for the wellbeing of all people with diabetes. There is a minimum level of healthcare that every person with diabetes deserves and should expect. Here are the **15 essential checks and services you should receive**. If you aren't getting all the care you need, take this checklist to your diabetes healthcare team and discuss it with them.

- 1 Get your blood glucose levels measured** at least once a year. An HbA1c blood test will measure your overall blood glucose control and help you and your diabetes healthcare team set your own target.
- 2 Have your blood pressure measured** and recorded at least once a year, and set a personal target that is right for you.
- 3 Have your blood fats (cholesterol) measured** every year. Like blood glucose levels and blood pressure, you should have your own target that is realistic and achievable.
- 4 Have your eyes screened** for signs of retinopathy every year. Using a specialised digital camera, a photo of each eye will be taken and examined by a specialist who will look for any changes to your retina (the seeing part at the back of your eye).
- 5 Have your feet checked** – the skin, circulation and nerve supply of your feet should be examined annually. You should be told if you have any risk of foot problems, how serious they are and if you will be referred to a specialist podiatrist or specialist foot clinic.
- 6 Have your kidney function monitored** annually. You should have two tests for your kidneys: urine test for protein (a sign of possible kidney problems) and a blood test to measure kidney function.
- 7 Have your weight checked** and have your waist measured to see if you need to lose weight.
- 8 Get support if you are a smoker** including 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 in 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** to help you understand and manage your diabetes. You should be offered and have the opportunity to attend courses in your local area.
- 11 Receive paediatric care if you are a child or young person.** You should receive 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** as 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** to help you manage your diabetes. Diabetes affects different parts of the body and you should have the opportunity to see specialist professionals such as an ophthalmologist, podiatrist or dietitian.
- 15 Get emotional and psychological support.** Being diagnosed with diabetes and living with a long term condition can be difficult. You should be able to talk about your issues and concerns with specialist healthcare professionals.

Checks and services for children. Children should receive more frequent HbA1c measurements and regular weight, height and general health checks from their healthcare team. Formal screening for complications generally begin at age 12.

Become a member of Diabetes UK – www.diabetes.org.uk/membership or call 0845 123 2399

Get involved with our work and help improve services – www.diabetes.org.uk/get-involved

For advice and support call our Careline 0845 120 2960

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