



When your child has been newly diagnosed with Insulin Dependant  
Diabetes  
(Type 1 Diabetes)

## Patient Information Leaflet



**May 2018**

## Introduction and Diagnosis

You have just been told your child has diabetes, this is most likely to be type 1, and we all understand that this is a particularly difficult time for you. We do not know why your child has developed diabetes, however we do know that:

- There is nothing that could have been done to prevent it occurring
- It is not caused by eating too many sweets.
- It is not contagious

It is important to realise that no one is to blame when a child develops diabetes, and although it is a permanent condition, it is one that can be treated. Insulin injections must be given several times a day to keep the diabetes under control.

Your child will very soon be back to good health and will return to school and all their usual activities.

## Taking it in

The aim is to support you through these difficult early days, both in hospital and once you are home, and to give you continuing support to manage your child's diabetes. The team will teach you how to keep your child's blood glucose levels as normal as possible, allowing them to enjoy life to the full and grow in a healthy way through childhood and adolescence. This will be good preparation for your child in managing their diabetes as adults.

In these early stages it seems that there is much to learn - try not to let it overwhelm you. There is plenty of time and there are lots of people to help you and your family.

## What happens at diagnosis?

How your child is treated initially will depend on how poorly they are:

If your child is unwell, they may need to have frequent blood tests, drips and monitors and close observation by nursing and medical staff. When your child is stable the medical team will then discuss the diagnosis with you and your family. Within 24 hours/ next working day of your stay, the ward will let the diabetes team know about your child.

You will be introduced to the diabetes team, who will begin to explain & teach you about diabetes, and help you to care for your child. They will plan with you the frequency of contact in the early weeks after diagnosis. You will see the consultant, the paediatric diabetes specialist nurses and the dietitian. You and your child will also learn how to use the equipment; how to do blood sugar tests and give insulin injections. Please feel free to ask lots of questions.

Your child will have some blood tests to help confirm the diagnosis if Type 1 diabetes. We also check for some other conditions that can be associated with it (thyroid problems and coeliac disease). These results will be discussed with you at the first clinic appointment.

There is no special diet. No foods are “out of bounds” it is important to have a balanced diet and regular exercise

### What is Type 1 diabetes?

Type 1 diabetes can affect anyone, at any age. It isn't caused by poor diet or an unhealthy lifestyle. In fact, it isn't caused by anything that you did or didn't do. There was nothing you could have done to prevent it. It is a life-long condition in which the amount of sugar (glucose) in the blood is abnormally high. This is because the body has stopped making insulin. Insulin is normally made by special cells in the pancreas and is a hormone which allows glucose into the body's cells. This glucose is used as fuel to give the cells energy. This energy is needed for our muscles, brain, heart etc to work, allowing us to move and think. We get the glucose from the carbohydrates that we eat. Carbohydrates are present in certain types of food.

The pancreas produces INSULIN.  
Type 1 Diabetes occurs when the pancreas stops making insulin.

### What causes Type 1 diabetes?

No one really knows what causes Type 1 diabetes

### How do we treat Type 1 diabetes?

Diabetes cannot yet be cured, but it can be controlled by giving insulin by regular injections (with a tiny needle) to allow the body to run normally again. Your child will feel well and will grow and mature like they would do if they didn't have diabetes. Your child will have insulin injections every day, and you will be taught how to give these. Unfortunately insulin cannot be taken as tablets because it is destroyed in the stomach before it has a chance to enter the blood stream.

Normal blood sugar range is 4-7mmol

In hospital, quite quickly you and your child will be taught how to carbohydrate count to have the correct amount of insulin for the foods they are eating for meals and snacks. The dietitian will spend time with you teaching you to learn what foods have carbohydrates and which foods affect blood sugars quickly or slowly. You will be supported in learning how to calculate the carbohydrate in foods on the ward. Once the diabetes team have met with you, they will set up a different meter “Expert meter” which will calculate the amount of insulin for you to give.

Treatment will start immediately and will involve:

- A minimum of four injections of insulin a day
- Regular meals and sometimes snacks containing carbohydrate foods
- At least 5 blood glucose tests (finger pricks) each day

As treatment with insulin starts to make them feel better, your child's appetite may be larger than normal. This is what we would expect to happen and you should allow your child to eat to their appetite.

### Ready for home

Usually children stay in hospital for 3-4 days but this may be more or less depending on your child and how confident you are learning these new skills. It will be a decision between you and the diabetes team when you are ready to go home. When you do go home, you will be capable of using the equipment, giving insulin injections, managing high and low blood sugars, and knowing how to test for blood ketones and when to do this.

You will be discharged home usually after tea; this is to reduce the stress of being discharged, getting home organising meals, blood tests and injections, as well as all the other practicalities of family life.

Before you leave the hospital you will be given a discharge prescription with all the equipment and medication, and enough supplies to last a few days. You will need to order more from your GP on repeat prescription. The diabetes specialist nurses will set this up at your surgery.

### Visits and Phone calls

The diabetes nurses will arrange to visit you at home within the next couple of days after leaving hospital. They will also contact you regularly by phone for updates as adjustments to insulin doses may be required. **More importantly if you have any worries or concerns, please get in touch with the diabetes nurses**

In the early weeks and months the diabetes nurses will visit or contact you regularly providing advice, support and lots more education. There are many aspects to diabetes education and this will be provided when you are ready to take on board more information. You and your child will also be invited to attend yearly group education sessions.

If you notice blood sugars are always above 8mmol, don't wait until clinic, ring us! We like to hear from you

The diabetes nurses will contact your child's nursery/school and arrange education and training for staff to get your child back to school as soon as they feel ready.

The dietitian will also see you at home and ring to see how you are getting on. Our research nurse will contact you and provide some information about current diabetes research projects.

As part of routine diabetes care, you and your child/young person will have access to see a psychologist to discuss any issues and help coming to terms with, and living with, the diagnosis. The psychologist will usually be around when you attend your first clinic appointment, but you can ask to meet them sooner if this would be helpful.

After 12 years of age your child will have access to ophthalmology eye screening (opticians) every year to help screen for any diabetes related eye problems.

It's important to make sure you are happy at school

There is a local support group called "Tameside Warriors" which is run by local parents of children and young people with Type 1 diabetes who live in Tameside. They have a Facebook group, feel free to join when the time is right for you

### **Children's Diabetes Clinic**

Regular clinic visits are very important to ensure your child is keeping well. You will usually see a doctor, children's diabetes nurse, diabetes dietician and psychologist in your appointment, as well as the clinic nurses. Together the team are responsible for helping you to learn to manage the many different aspects of your child's diabetes. Laura who is the teams clerical co-ordinator is available for any queries with clinic appointments/cancellations or changes. If you can't get hold of the diabetes nurses please ring Laura.

### **Where is my appointment?**

Children's Outpatients Department, Hartshead South building, Tameside Hospital

### **When will it be?**

Consultant clinics are held on Wednesday mornings  
Nurse led clinics are held Tuesdays/Thursdays

### **How often will we be seen?**

Your very first appointment is usually within 3-4 weeks from being discharged home. If you have not received an appointment within 2 weeks please contact the diabetes team.

Your child will then be seen every 3 months or sometimes more frequently, particularly if you are struggling with high blood glucose levels.

### **What do I bring to clinic?**

Please bring your blood glucose meter so we can download it, and also your blood sugar diary. Families are encouraged to keep their own record of blood sugars either by writing a diary or electronically downloading at home (Diasend). You choose, the choice is yours!

Remember, keeping a diary of blood sugars is to help you to look after your child's diabetes and notice patterns of highs/lows

### **Disability Living Allowance (DLA)**

Your child is entitled to claim DLA after 3 months from diagnosis. If you need help completing the form please contact DLA helpline 08457123456. There is a section that the nurses need to complete.

### **Where do I take my sharps bin?**

As needles are sharps they need to be disposed of safely, enclosed within your pack is a list of local pharmacies that accept them.

We hope this information has been helpful and appreciate any comments or feedback.

#### **Members of The Paediatric Diabetes Team**

##### **Dr Sarah Tatnall Consultant Paediatrician**

Secretary- 0161 922 5257

##### **Dr Jackie Birch Consultant Paediatrician**

Secretary 0161 922 5259

##### **Jenny Butterworth Paediatric Diabetes Specialist Nurse**

Office: 0161 922 5433

Mobile: 07775032136

##### **Karen Wright Paediatric Diabetes Specialist Nurse**

Office: 0161 922 4844

Mobile: 07760991621

##### **Laura Nicholas Clerical Co-ordinator**

Office: 0161 922 5262

##### **Rachel Lawson and Rebecca Shaw- Paediatric Diabetes Dietitian**

0161 366 2376

##### **Kate Moss-Psychologist**

Available Tues and Weds

0161 922 4546

#### **FOR EMERGENCIES AFTER 5PM OR WEEKENDS AND BANK HOLIDAYS :**

If your child is unwell and you need advice please contact:

Call hospital switchboard on

**0161 922 6000** and ask for **on-call Paediatric Registrar** (Doctor)

If you have any questions you want to ask, you can use this space below to remind you

If you have a visual impairment this leaflet can be made available in bigger print or on audiotape. If you require either of these options please contact the Patient Information Centre on 0161 922 5332

আপনি যদি এই তথ্য পড়তে বা বুঝতে না পারেন, তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে এখনি হেল্প টিমের সাথে টেলিফোনে যোগাযোগ করুন 0161 331 5149/5150 এই নাম্বারে, তখন তারা আপনাকে সাহায্য করতে পারবে।

જો આપ આ માહિતી વાંચી કે સમજી શકો છો તો કૃપા કરી, અંતર્ગત હેલ્પ ટીમનો 0161 331 5149/5150 નંબર પર સંપર્ક શાંધો તેઓ આપને જનૂન મદદ કરશે.

اگر یہ معلومات پڑھ نہیں سکتے ہیں یا آپ کو اس کی سمجھ نہیں آتی ہے تو براہ مہربانی آٹھنک ہیلپ ٹیم کے ساتھ ٹیلی فون نمبر 0161 331 5149/5150 پر رابطہ کریں تو وہ آپ کی مدد کر سکیں گے۔

Author: Jenny Butterworth  
Division/Department: Women and Children's Paediatric Diabetes  
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