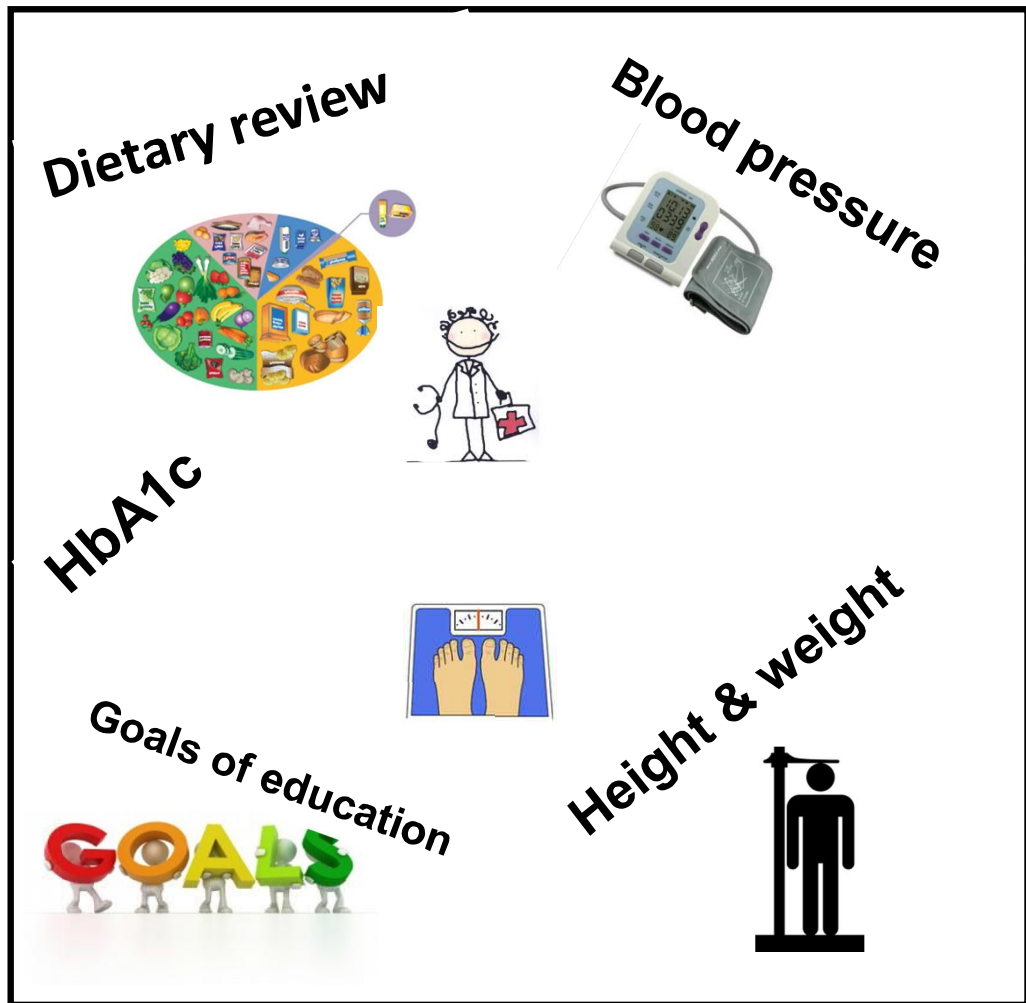




# **PATIENT INFORMATION**

## **Torbay Children's Diabetes Service** **All about the** **Paediatric Diabetes Annual Review**



## **What is the Annual Review?**

Every child and young person with diabetes is required to have an annual review once a year.

The annual review provides an opportunity to take a look at all aspects of your diabetes, what is going well, what may not be going so well and to check for any early signs of other health concerns which may be related to it. If problems are picked up at an early stage, they can be addressed before they go on to become more serious.

This leaflet will explain what to expect, who you will see, what will be checked and why.

### **When you arrive at clinic:**

On arrival in clinic your height, weight and blood pressure will be measured as usual. We will also ask you to provide a urine sample.

You will be given a well-being questionnaire to fill in before you going to see the consultant. This helps us to understand if you are finding any aspects of life with diabetes particularly difficult, such as fear of hypoglycaemia or just feeling really fed-up with it all, and to find the most appropriate ways to help support you. It may be helpful for you to talk to one of our psychologists.

The psychologists are important members of the team. They are not generally able to come to clinics, but are available to offer support with the emotional aspects of diabetes. If you would like to talk to them, please ask either your nurse or any one of the team to make a referral for you.

You will then go in to meet with the others members of the diabetes team.

### **Paediatric Diabetes Specialist Nurses (PDSNs)**

As in general diabetes clinics, one of the PDSNs will take you into a clinic room where they will, if you haven't already done so, download your blood glucose meter or pump, and will take a drop of blood from a finger prick to check the HBA1c.

They will also ask you some questions relating to 'The Goals of Diabetes education', and give you a chance to say if there is anything you are currently concerned about, and wish to discuss.

They will check your injection sites to make sure they are not thickened or lumpy, as this will stop insulin working properly. One of the doctors can do this if you prefer.

## **Paediatric diabetes Dietitians**

Every child or young person with diabetes should be seen at least once a year by a dietitian for a general dietary review. At the annual review, they will take a diet history to check that your diet is healthy and well-balanced and that you are not missing out on any important nutrients. They will be able to offer support and advice on any food-related issues, as well as with other dietary concerns related to diabetes, for example carbs and exercise, or weight management.

## **Consultants**

You will also see one of the diabetes consultants who will chat with you about how things have been over the year. You will be able to ask questions and discuss any areas of diabetes that are worrying you or that you are struggling with.

The doctor will also take a look at the download from your meter or pump with you, discuss this, and suggest adjustments that may need to be made to your insulin. They will also help you to find ways to deal with aspects of diabetes that you are may be finding a challenge.

The Doctors will also give you the chance to talk about other areas of your life which are important to you, and to look at how to manage diabetes around them, these might include for example sports, parties, school, exams, and holidays.

They will also check your feet and injection sites, if not already done so by the PDSN.

## **Height and weight**

Height and weight are checked as a part of each appointment and are plotted on charts called 'Centile charts'. These allow us to check that you are growing as expected.

Blood glucose levels that are well-controlled will allow children to grow and develop normally. However, blood glucose levels that are too high can prevent a child from growing as well as they should.

If a child does not grow as expected, it can sometimes indicate other possible problems, which would then be looked into.

## **Blood pressure**

Blood pressure is checked to make sure it is not too high. It is unusual to see high blood pressure in children and young people, but if present it could indicate that the kidneys are not working as well as they should be. However, if coming to clinic makes you worried, this can make your blood pressure higher than usual!

In older people, high blood pressure can also be a risk factor for heart disease and strokes, so it is important to pick up any changes early on.

## **Urine test**

You will be given a small pot and asked to provide a urine sample. This is sent to the laboratory where they will test for traces of a protein called Albumin. You may hear it called urinary microalbuminuria screen or UMA for short. If there is protein present, it could suggest that there is a risk of kidney disease.

The kidneys have a few important functions. One is to filter and clean the blood to get rid of any waste by making urine. They also regulate the amount of fluid and various salts in the body, which also helps to control blood pressure, and they release several hormones.

Nephropathy is the name for kidney disease and is when the kidneys begin to not work as well as they should.

## **Foot Check**

During the annual review appointment your feet will be examined by either the Doctor or Nurse. This is to check that the feet are healthy, that the toenails or verrucae are not causing any problems, and to discuss good foot care. The sensation will also be checked, as high blood glucose levels over many years can damage the nerves (neuropathy).

## **Blood Tests**

Blood tests are an important part of the annual review. It is useful to have these done before the annual review so that the results are available when you come for your appointment. Older children and young people will be able to have these taken at your GP surgery, but younger children, or those who have problems with blood tests will generally need to come to the blood clinic at the hospital, where numbing cream or spray can be used.

The telephone number to book a blood clinic appointment is: 01803 656356

Blood tests should be taken to screen for the following:

- Coeliac Disease - this is an auto-immune condition sometimes associated with diabetes, where the body is unable to process gluten which is found in wheat products. You may hear this referred to as Tissue Transglutaminase or TTG test.

- **Thyroid Disease** - the thyroid gland produces a hormone which regulates the body's metabolism (simply put – how fast it works!) People with diabetes may have a slightly increased risk of having an underactive thyroid. An underactive thyroid is treated by taking thyroxine tablets. This is also an auto-immune condition. We test for Thyroid Stimulating Hormone (TSH) and the thyroid hormones T3 & T4.
- **Cholesterol** - Cholesterol is a fatty substance known as a lipid and is needed for the body to function normally. It's mainly made by the liver, but can also be found in some foods. Having a high level of lipids in the blood (hyperlipidaemia) can have an effect on health. This may not always be taken in children under the age of 12 years.

Auto-immune conditions are when the body attacks its own healthy cells by mistake. Normally, the immune system fights infections.

### **HbA1c (Glycosylated Haemoglobin)**

This blood test is done in the clinic using a single drop of blood and measures the amount of glucose being carried around by the red blood cells. Glucose binds to a particular part of the red blood cells called haemoglobin. As red blood cells have a life-span of around 2 – 3 months, HbA1c gives an average of the blood glucose control over this time. Ideally, HbA1c should be close to the level of someone without diabetes to minimise the risk of complications developing. The target we aim for is less than 48mmol/mol.

### **Retinal Screening**

From the age of 12 years, all young people with diabetes will be called annually for retinal screening, generally at your GP surgery. Retinal screening is where a photograph is taken to check that the back of the eyes are healthy.

High blood glucose levels over time can cause some blocking of small blood vessels at the back of the eye, (Retinopathy) which if allowed to progress, can seriously affect eyesight. However, if caught at an early stage, it is reversible and is treatable with improved blood glucose control.

This will not be done at the annual review, but we will check the results.

### **Smoking**

Smoking is one of the main causes of preventable illness and early death. We will ask about smoking, and will offer to refer to the smoking cessation service if this is something that applies to you. You can also find advice and information at [www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/services/healthy-lifestyles/stop-smoking](http://www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/services/healthy-lifestyles/stop-smoking)

### **Goals of Diabetes Education**

It is important for children to gradually learn about how to manage diabetes as they grow up. Those over the age of 6 years will be given a hand-out with the 'Goals of Diabetes Education' applicable to your age group. This will give you an idea of what a child or

young person of your age could generally be expected to know and understand. If there are any areas which you would like more information about, please speak to your nurse, or any other member of the team.

We have an education checklist to help us record when we cover aspects of diabetes with you, and when there are subjects you would like more information.

**If there is anything in this leaflet that you are worried about or have any questions, please do ask any member of the team.**

## **Useful Sources of Support and Information**

### **General Websites:**

[www.diabetes.org.uk](http://www.diabetes.org.uk)

[www.childrenwithdiabetesuk.org](http://www.childrenwithdiabetesuk.org)

[www.jdrf.org.uk](http://www.jdrf.org.uk)

[www.DigiBete.org](http://www.DigiBete.org) (free essential films & resources to help manage Type 1)

[www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk) (emotional support and mental health well-being)

### **Websites with information about sport and exercise:**

[www.runsweet.com](http://www.runsweet.com)

[www.excarbs.com](http://www.excarbs.com)

### **Apps**

Cook and Count: Diabetes recipe app & carb counter

### **Local Facebook page:**

“Type 1 support group for parents in Torbay and Teignbridge”  
A group run by parents

### **Books:**

Type 1 Diabetes in Children, Adolescents and Young Adults. How to become an expert on your own diabetes by Ragnar Hanas. (Class Publishing)

Diabetes Through the Looking Glass – Seeing diabetes from your child’s perspective by Rachel Besser. (Class Publishing 2009)

Produced by Torbay Paediatric Diabetes Team

This leaflet is also available electronically in large print or PDF format, please e-mail: [sdhct.childrensdiabetestorbay@nhs.net](mailto:sdhct.childrensdiabetestorbay@nhs.net)

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