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DIABETES PATIENT EDUCATION GUIDE

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Diabetes Patient Education Guide

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Disclaimer: We have attempted to make the information contained in this booklet as accurate as possible; however, Medical Forms Management, Inc. makes no guarantees as to its accuracy and assumes no liability for the use of this publication and forms.

Research Resources: American Diabetes Association; CDC Prevention Guidelines; National Guideline Clearinghouse; National Institutes of Health

SECTION 1. The Disease Process

You may ask yourself if diabetes is a common disease. The answer is **yes!** You are definitely not alone!

Diabetes is not only a common disease, but a complex, serious and costly disease. The human suffering and economic burden of diabetes on the U.S. population is substantial and growing.

WHAT IS DIABETES?

Diabetes is a disease in which the body does not produce insulin or properly use insulin, a hormone made by the pancreas. The pancreas is an organ located behind the stomach. Insulin is needed to change sugar, starches and other food into energy needed for daily life.

When you eat, food is broken down in your stomach and bowels into a form of sugar known as glucose. Glucose is absorbed and is carried by the blood to the different cells of your body for use as fuel. Your body needs insulin to open the cell door and let the glucose in to the cell. As glucose goes in to the cells, the amount of sugar in the blood is lowered. Once inside the cell, the glucose is burned, like fuel, to make heat and energy. If you do not need all the glucose for energy right now, it is stored in the cells.

So, what happens if you do not have any insulin or if your insulin doesn't work right? Glucose is not able to get into the cells and continues to build up in your bloodstream. Your blood sugar level gets higher and higher and results in diabetes symptoms.

CAUSES OF DIABETES

The cause of diabetes remains a mystery. Genetics and environmental factors, such as obesity and lack of exercise, appear to play a role in contributing to developing diabetes. Remember, your friends and family cannot "catch" diabetes from you since **diabetes is not contagious.**

SECTION 2. Types of Diabetes

There are two major types of diabetes: type 1 diabetes and type 2 diabetes. Other types of diabetes include gestational diabetes and a type resulting from certain genetic syndromes, surgery, drugs, malnutrition, infections and other illnesses.

TYPE 1 DIABETES

Type 1 diabetes, also known as insulin-requiring diabetes, is believed to be an autoimmune reaction. This means that the body attacks itself by mistake. The body destroys the cells in the pancreas that produce insulin. This usually leads to the total failure of the pancreas to produce insulin. As a result, you do not have insulin to “unlock” the cells of your body and allow glucose to enter the cells and fuel them. Without insulin, glucose builds up in your bloodstream, and your body cannot control blood sugar levels.

Type 1 diabetes is diagnosed most often in children, teens and young adults, but it can start at any age. People with type 1 diabetes must take daily insulin injections in order to stay alive. Type 1 diabetes accounts for 5-10% of diabetes and tends to run in families.

Warning Signs of Type 1 Diabetes:

- High levels of sugar in the blood
- High levels of sugar in the urine
- Frequent urination (and/or bed-wetting in children)
- Unusual extreme thirst
- Extreme hunger
- Unusual extreme weight loss
- Extreme fatigue, weakness and tiredness
- Irritability, mood changes and/or feeling edgy
- Feeling sick to your stomach and vomiting
- Flu-like symptoms in children

Type 1 Diabetes Treatment Plan

The treatment plan for type 1 diabetes includes, but is not limited to:

- Insulin to lower the blood sugar.
- Meal planning, including foods to eat and when to eat them.
- Exercise program to lower the blood sugar.
- Blood and/or urine testing to monitor the blood sugar level.

Three Key Problems of Type 1 Diabetes

You can be prepared for problems caused by type 1 diabetes. These problems are generally put into three categories:

1. **Hypoglycemia** (low blood sugar) – also called an insulin reaction.
2. **Hyperglycemia** (high blood sugar) – occurs when the blood sugar becomes too high.
3. **Ketoacidosis** (diabetic coma) – a serious condition usually meaning your diabetes is not under control.

TYPE 2 DIABETES

Type 2 diabetes is the most common form of the disease and accounts for 90-95% of diabetes. Type 2 diabetes is increasing to an epidemic level in the United States due to the increased number of older Americans, a greater prevalence of obesity and a sedentary lifestyle. Type 2 diabetes is most common in adults, but more and more children, teens and young adults are developing type 2 diabetes.

Type 2 diabetes, commonly called non-insulin dependent diabetes, is a metabolic disorder resulting from the body's inability to make enough insulin (insulin deficiency) or properly use insulin (insulin resistance). Type 2 diabetes is a disease that affects the way your body uses food.

Warning Signs of Type 2 Diabetes:

- Any of the type 1 symptoms
- Frequent infections
- Blurred vision
- Cuts and bruises that are slow to heal
- Tingling, numbness or loss of feeling in the hands or feet
- Recurring skin, gum, vaginal or bladder infections
- Dry, itchy skin

The exact cause of type 2 diabetes is unknown; however, medical experts and researchers have identified five signs common to those persons likely to develop type 2 diabetes:

- Strong family history of diabetes
- History of gestational (pregnancy) diabetes
- Temporary diabetes during stressful situations like surgery or infection
- Abnormal blood glucose levels when taking certain medications, such as cortisone or birth control pills
- Belonging to an ethnic group with a high rate of type 2 diabetes (Latino, Asian American, Pacific Islander, Native American, African American)

Those who are at a greater risk for developing type 2 diabetes also include people over the age of 45, who are overweight, who do not exercise regularly, and who have low levels of high-density lipoprotein (HDL) or high triglycerides.



This file is just a small sample of this booklet

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