

My Diabetes Health Checks

Looking after your health can sometimes mean learning about other conditions that can be linked to Type 1 Diabetes. As a champion of your own health, it is good to familiarise yourself with Diabetes health checks and what they mean.

**Remember: The best person to look after your health and diabetes is you.
You are not alone though, your diabetes team are there to help you.**

Health Checks occur regularly throughout the year and can range from person to person. Some of these health checks can be completed alone or with a family member, whereas others happen during an appointment at the hospital. We call this your **“Annual Review”**.

What to expect at your Annual Review



This is typically undertaken with your diabetes team. We will talk about how you have been getting on with your diabetes care. We will also take blood for your yearly blood tests and take physical measurements such as your height, weight and blood pressure. This is to look after your physical health. We will also let you know where to find other information relating to your general health; dentistry, exercise, vaccinations and more.

Additional information sheets may also be provided during your annual review, this is what they might look like:

Sick day rules: insulin pen therapy

What happens when you are unwell?

RULE NUMBER 1 Do not stop taking your insulin. Even if you are not eating, you must take your insulin. If you are unable to take your insulin, contact your diabetes team.

RULE NUMBER 2 Check your blood glucose levels more often than usual. At least every 4 hours.

RULE NUMBER 3 If your blood glucose is above 16mmol/L, you may need to take extra insulin. Contact your diabetes team for advice.

RULE NUMBER 4 If your blood glucose is below 4mmol/L, you may need to take extra carbohydrate. Contact your diabetes team for advice.

RULE NUMBER 5 If you are unwell, you may need to stop taking your insulin. Contact your diabetes team for advice.

RULE NUMBER 6 If you are unwell, you may need to stop taking your insulin. Contact your diabetes team for advice.

Other things:

- 1. If you are unwell, you may need to stop taking your insulin. Contact your diabetes team for advice.
- 2. Always check your blood glucose levels before you take any insulin. Contact your diabetes team for advice.
- 3. If you are unwell, you may need to stop taking your insulin. Contact your diabetes team for advice.

Treatment of hypoglycaemia: insulin pen therapy

What to do when your blood glucose is low (below 4mmol/L)

Level	15mg 50% Glucagon	30mg 100% Glucagon	60mg 100% Glucagon	120mg 100% Glucagon	180mg 100% Glucagon	240mg 100% Glucagon
4.0 - 5.0	1 x 15mg	1 x 30mg	1 x 60mg	1 x 120mg	1 x 180mg	1 x 240mg
3.0 - 4.0	1 x 15mg	1 x 30mg	1 x 60mg	1 x 120mg	1 x 180mg	1 x 240mg
2.0 - 3.0	1 x 15mg	1 x 30mg	1 x 60mg	1 x 120mg	1 x 180mg	1 x 240mg
1.0 - 2.0	1 x 15mg	1 x 30mg	1 x 60mg	1 x 120mg	1 x 180mg	1 x 240mg
0.5 - 1.0	1 x 15mg	1 x 30mg	1 x 60mg	1 x 120mg	1 x 180mg	1 x 240mg

What to do when your blood glucose is low (below 4mmol/L) - small (15mg) carbohydrate rule

What to do when your blood glucose is low (below 4mmol/L) - large (30mg) carbohydrate rule

What to do when your blood glucose is low (below 4mmol/L) - 60mg carbohydrate rule

What to do when your blood glucose is low (below 4mmol/L) - 120mg carbohydrate rule

What to do when your blood glucose is low (below 4mmol/L) - 180mg carbohydrate rule

What to do when your blood glucose is low (below 4mmol/L) - 240mg carbohydrate rule



Sick day rules: insulin pump therapy

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2.0 - 3.0	1 x 15mg	1 x 30mg	1 x 60mg	1 x 120mg	1 x 180mg	1 x 240mg
1.0 - 2.0	1 x 15mg	1 x 30mg	1 x 60mg	1 x 120mg	1 x 180mg	1 x 240mg
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What to do when your blood glucose is low (below 4mmol/L) - 60mg carbohydrate rule

What to do when your blood glucose is low (below 4mmol/L) - 120mg carbohydrate rule

What to do when your blood glucose is low (below 4mmol/L) - 180mg carbohydrate rule

What to do when your blood glucose is low (below 4mmol/L) - 240mg carbohydrate rule

Looking after your teeth when you have Type 1 Diabetes

Everyone needs to look after their teeth. If you have Type 1 Diabetes, there are some things you need to know to help you look after your teeth.

Brush your teeth: It is important to brush your teeth twice a day with toothpaste that has fluoride in it. You should also use a fluoride mouthwash at a different time of the day.

Visit your dentist: If you are brushing at home with toothpaste, you may need to visit your dentist for a fluoride mouthwash or other treatment.

Check your diet: If you are not eating enough to keep your teeth healthy, you may need to eat a special diet. This could be a special diet for people with diabetes.

Use fluoride toothpaste: It is possible to use fluoride toothpaste that has fluoride in it. This can help to keep your teeth healthy.

Visit your dentist: It is important to visit a dentist regularly. A dentist can check your teeth and tell you if you need any treatment.

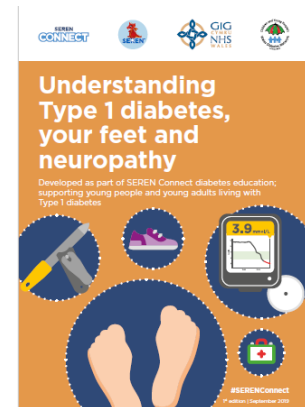
Foot Screening

What is it? An assessment of your overall foot health. At annual review your health care team will check the health of your feet. You will need to remove your shoes and socks/tights so that your feet, legs, toes, skin and circulation can be assessed. It can be helpful to wear shoes that are easy to get on and off when you come to your appointment.

Screening will help to identify any signs of something called **“neuropathy”** which can occur when blood glucose runs high over a long time period, causing damage to tiny blood vessels and nerves in your feet and hands.

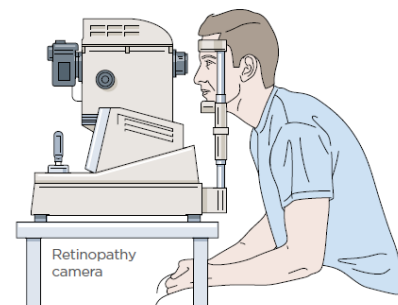
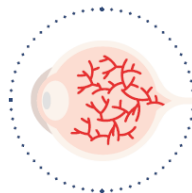
Where to go? Your diabetes health care team will check your feet at your **annual review**. If needed, they may refer you to someone called a **podiatrist** for further treatment.

How Often? Feet checks occur once a year at annual review, after your 12th birthday. However, it is important to check your feet and clean them regularly yourself to ensure good foot health. It is important that you also take regular care of your nails and skin around the feet. For further information on foot health, please ask your health care professionals about the CONNECT resources.



Retinopathy Screening

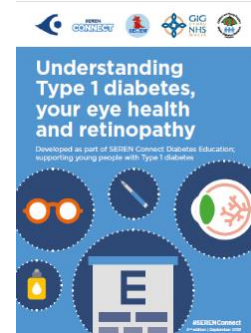
What is it? A specialised camera used to take a medical photograph of the back of the eye (Retina). This is analysed by a retinal grader who will look for any changes in eye health related to diabetes. Over time, having high levels of blood glucose may lead to tiny nerve damages in the small blood vessels of the eye, this can lead to something called **Retinopathy**. Retinopathy is a medical condition that can affect your sight.



Where to go? Your retinopathy screening will take place at either of the following locations; your GP surgery, hospital or in one of the Diabetic Eye Screening Wales (DESW) Vans.

How Often? Every 1-2 years after your 12th birthday.

For further information, speak to your health care team and ask for the CONNECT booklet. DESW can be contacted on: **0300 003 0500**



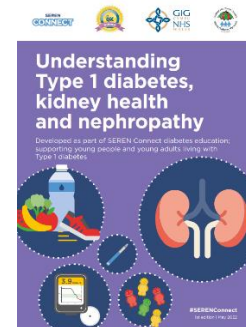
Nephropathy Screening

What is it? Over time, having lots of glucose in the blood can affect the tiny nerves and blood vessels in your kidneys. This stops them from being able to work as well as they should and can lead to diabetic nephropathy, or kidney disease. A urine test called the albumin: creatinine ratio (ACR) looks for signs that protein is leaking into the urine. This is often an early sign of kidney disease.



Where to go? You will be asked to provide a urine sample at your Annual Review appointment.

How Often? Your urine will be tested once a year at your annual review, this is a requirement after your 12th birthday however in Cwm Taf Morgannwg we can start this process at any age.



For further information on kidney health, please ask your health care professionals about the CONNECT resources.

Annual review bloods

What is it? There are a number of blood tests that will be performed for Annual Review, to help with early detection of complications and other conditions associated with Type 1 Diabetes. This allows the diabetes team to monitor any changes in your health and to advise the best treatments. The following is usually tested:



- **Thyroid function.** People living with diabetes are more at risk of developing other autoimmune conditions, such as hypothyroidism. It's important for us to check your thyroid because thyroid hormones are responsible for influencing metabolism, growth and development and body temperature.
- **Coeliac disease** is another autoimmune condition where the body's immune system attacks part of the digestive system when gluten is eaten. This causes gut damage and means the body can't properly absorb nutrients from food.
- **Cholesterol levels.** Cholesterol is a type of fat that is found in the blood stream. Two main types of cholesterol are tested:
 - LDL cholesterol. This can get stuck in the walls of the blood vessels and cause blockages, known as "atherosclerosis". High levels can be harmful and lead to cardiovascular (or heart) disease.
 - HDL cholesterol. This is a protective type of cholesterol and stops blood vessels from blocking.
- **HbA1c** measures how much glucose has stuck to the haemoglobin in your blood and provides an average of the blood glucose over the last 3 months. The target HbA1c that we work towards with children and young people is **48mmol/mol**.

Some people can find that they feel very worried about having a blood test as part of their Diabetes Annual Review. It's okay to find this stressful and it's something that the diabetes team can help you with. Please let someone in your team know if you are feeling worried about having your Annual Review Blood Test and would like some support with this.

Where to go? The tests are carried out by a Phlebotomist at (or around the time of) your annual review

How Often? Once a year at your annual review. Cholesterol levels are measured yearly, this is a requirement after your 12th birthday however in Cwm Taf Morgannwg we can start this process at any age.

Height, weight and Body Mass Index (BMI)

What is it? Everyone's body is different. We measure your height, weight and BMI to check that you are growing as expected for your age. This can be plotted on 'Centile' growth charts. It's important for us to know this because we know that living with underweight or overweight can be linked to other health problems now and in the future.



Where to go? Height, weight and BMI measurements are taken at your routine clinic appointments.

How Often? Routine appointments usually occur 4 times per year, but may be more frequent depending on your individual needs.

If you feel you want further support with your weight or BMI, please let someone in your Diabetes Team know. We can arrange for you to speak with your Dietitian. If you require further support with your relationship with food or your body image, your Dietitian might suggest that you speak to the Diabetes Psychologist. This might be in an appointment with both your Dietitian and Psychology or they may make a plan for you to meet with the Psychologist separately.

Blood pressure

What is it? This is measured using a cuff on your arm. It measures the pressure in your blood vessels when your heart beats. If this is too high (hypertension) or too low (hypotension) then it can cause problems. High blood pressure can increase the risk of damage to your blood vessels which can affect other organs such as your heart, eyes and kidneys. Sometimes, if you are worried coming to clinic, this can make your blood pressure temporarily high.



Where to go? This will be tested at your review appointments.



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Cwm Taf Morgannwg
University Health Board

How Often? Blood pressure is monitored regularly. This enables changes to be picked up early and treated with adjustments in lifestyle and/or medication. Some people can feel anxious about having their blood pressure taken. If this is something you find difficult, please let someone in your Diabetes Team know so that we can support you.

Emotional and psychological support

What is it? Diabetes is a very difficult health condition to live with, so it is common and very understandable for people living with diabetes to experience periods in their life when they struggle with low mood, anxiety or burnout (feeling fed up and/or exhausted by Diabetes).

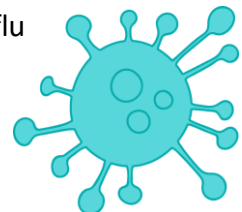


If you are finding life with Diabetes difficult, please let someone in your Diabetes Team know so that they can help you. Even if you haven't told us that you are having problems, you will be given a wellbeing questionnaire to fill in before your Annual Review appointment. This helps us to check in with you about how you are finding living with diabetes and to know whether there are any parts of your life which you are finding difficult at the moment. If you are finding things difficult, we would like to support you. We will look at your answers to the questionnaire during your Annual Review appointment and we might also ask you more questions about this, so that we can understand what is going on and think together about how we might be able to help. It may be helpful for you to talk to our Psychologist

How Often? The wellbeing questionnaire is provided yearly, however we will check in with you regularly about your wellbeing when we meet with you. We want to know how you are getting on so please do let us know if you are finding things difficult at any point.

Flu vaccination

What is it? Everybody living with type 1 diabetes is encouraged to have a flu vaccination every year, before the start of winter. It can be in the form of an injection (known as the 'flu jab') or a nasal spray. This is to protect yourself from the most common types of flu and the impact it can have on your diabetes.



Where to go? Your flu vaccination may be offered at your school. If not, you can get vaccinated at your GP surgery.

How Often? Once per year, usually in the autumn.

Smoking status

What is it? Healthcare professionals have a duty to ask if you smoke or vape, this is because we know there are health risks linked to smoking. Smoking increases the risk of cardiovascular (or heart) disease and high blood pressure that is linked to damaged blood vessels. People living with Type 1 Diabetes are already at a higher risk of these. If you smoke and want to give up, your diabetes team and GP will be able to assess you and offer the most appropriate support to help you quit.

Where to go? Your diabetes team will ask about your smoking status in your annual review appointment.

How Often? Once per year, in your annual review appointment. However, you can ask your team for support around quitting smoking or vaping at any point.

Dental examinations

What is it? A dental check-up allows your dentist to see if you have any problems with your teeth, gums and mouth. If you have Type 1 diabetes there will be times when you need to treat hypos with sugary drinks or sweets, which means you might need to take extra care of your teeth to avoid tooth decay and keep your mouth healthy.

Where to go? Your diabetes team will recommend regular dental examinations at your annual review appointment. NHS dental care for children is free. A list of NHS dentists can be found on the NHS Wales website.

How Often? The time between check-ups can vary depending on how healthy your teeth and gums are and your risk of future problems. Your dentist should suggest when you should have your next check-up.

For further information, ask for a copy of our information leaflet 'Looking after your teeth when you have Type 1 Diabetes'.

