

Overview of Session 2 - Taking control of your diabetes Part 1

Objectives for session 2

1. Participants will understand the:
 - importance of blood glucose testing and blood pressure control in managing their diabetes.
 - importance of looking after their feet
 - medications that they are taking

Introducing session 2

2. In your introduction:
 - welcome and introduce the new health professional(s) (podiatrist/pharmacist) if appropriate
 - recap on session 1 including the advantages/disadvantages of healthier lifestyles
 - collect food and activity diaries
 - let your group know their objectives for session 2

Topics covered in session 2

3. The topics you will cover are:
 - a) **Blood glucose testing**
 - discuss its importance, and how and when to do this
 - b) **Blood pressure checks**
 - discuss the importance of checking BP, and how often it should be checked
 - c) **Foot care**
 - discuss the importance of looking after your feet, including demonstration (a podiatrist could lead this if available)
 - d) **Medication**
 - discuss any medications taken by your participants (the community pharmacist could lead on this if available)

Tea break (afternoon session only)

4. You can use this time to reinforce key messages from session 1:

(a) Healthy eating & Physical activity

- remind the group 'what is healthy eating'
- group discussion - any new opinions on advantages/disadvantages of healthy living, or further barriers to healthy living identified?

(b) 'The Chinese Balance of Good Health' poster

- discuss the poster - has this helped?
- discuss portion sizes - using pictures and/or examples - how are the group managing their portion sizes?

5. You could also answer any questions your group might have regarding testing their blood glucose level, checking their blood pressure and feet and their medication.

Diabetes and your daily life

6. Discuss:

Family	Eating out
Religion	Smoking
Travel	Alcohol
Driving	Employment

Review of personal targets

7. Discuss:

- the content of the participant's food and activity diaries and provide feedback on their performance
- and agree new dietary and physical activity targets (let your participant's know that their progress will be checked at session 3)

End of session

8. Finish off with:

- group discussion including feedback
- suggestions for next session
- action - do some physical activity with the group e.g. group walk, dancing

Lunch (morning session only)

9. You can use this time to reinforce key messages from session 1

(a) Healthy eating & Physical activity

- remind the group 'what is healthy eating'
- group discussion - any new opinions on advantages/disadvantages of healthy living, or further barriers to healthy living identified?

(b) 'The Chinese Balance of Good Health' poster

- discuss the poster - has this helped?
- discuss portion sizes - using pictures and/or examples - how are the group managing their portion sizes?

10. You could also answer any further questions your group might have regarding session 2.

Resources needed

11. You will need:

- equipment for blood glucose testing
- blood pressure monitor
- trained interpreter
- podiatrist
- community pharmacist (if available)
- music and cd player
- laptop
- PowerPoint projector
- flipchart and marker
- translated handouts
- fruit juice, glucose drinks & tablets in case someone has a hypo
- tea, fruit juice and fruit for tea break, OR food and drinks for lunch

A quick guide to session 2- Taking control of your diabetes part 1

Content	Time	Slides	Resources needed
Welcome everyone back Collect health record cards and food diaries	5 mins	Slide 37	Trained interpreter; laptop & power point projector
Group discussion - feedback from previous session; advantages and disadvantages of healthier lifestyles; barriers to reaching targets Topics covered in session 2	10 mins	Slide 38 Slide 39	Flipchart & marker
Blood glucose testing - find out current knowledge within the group; discuss importance; how and when to do this	20 mins	Slide 40	Blood glucose testing equipment
Blood pressure checks - discuss importance and how often BP should be checked	10 mins	Slide 41	Blood pressure monitor
Looking after your feet- discussion plus demonstration	20 mins	Slides 42-43	Podiatrist
Medication - discussion of medicines taken by group for diabetes (could have input from community pharmacist if available)	15 mins	Slide 44	Community pharmacist if available
* tea break			Tea, fruit juice & fruit
Discuss Diabetes and daily life - your family - religion (fasting) - driving - travel - employment - eating out - alcohol - smoking	25 mins	Slides 45-53	Translated handouts
Review of personal targets	5mins	Slide 54	Personal record cards
End of session Group discussion; suggestions for next session Date, time & venue for next session Group physical activity	10 mins	Slide 55	Music & CD player
* Lunch			Food and drinks

* include a tea break when running sessions in the afternoon **OR**, have lunch at the end of a session when running sessions in the morning

Educator's notes for session 2 - Taking control of your diabetes part 1

Introduction

15 minutes

use flipchart & marker

1. Show slides 37-39 and welcome participants back. Introduce the new health professional(s) (podiatrist/pharmacist) if appropriate. Also collect food and activity diaries.
2. Recap on session 1 including the ground rules and the advantages/disadvantages of healthier lifestyles.
3. Objectives - Let your group know their objectives for session 2. At the end of session 2, participants will understand the:
 - importance of blood glucose testing and blood pressure control in managing their diabetes
 - importance of looking after their feet
 - medications that they are taking

Blood sugar (glucose) testing

20 minutes

1. Show slide 40 - Find out how many of your group test their blood sugar levels at home.
2. Investigate your participants' knowledge of blood sugar testing and, depending on how much they know:
 - explain what blood sugar testing is
 - explain why it is necessary. Highlight the importance of regular testing in reducing the chances of developing complications from diabetes
 - demonstrate to your group how they can test their blood sugar level at home
 - explain when testing should be carried out and the expected levels before and after meals
 - discuss the importance of learning how food, activity and medicines can affect your blood sugar levels
 - discuss the difference between testing blood sugar at home and having HbA1c levels checked when seen by your doctor/nurse
3. See additional notes (page 31)

Blood pressure checks

10 minutes

1. **Show slide 41** and explain to participants the importance of keeping their blood pressure under control - to reduce the chances of developing complications from diabetes. Also remind your group ways of reducing their BP (healthy eating, physical activity and not smoking).
2. Using the **personal record cards** discuss, blood pressure levels with your group. Also mention what the general target for people with diabetes should be (140/80 mmHg).
3. Discuss medicines which keep blood pressure under control, if appropriate. Your pharmacist may lead on this if they are available.
4. Discuss how often blood pressure should be checked.

Looking after your feet

20 minutes

1. Discuss the importance of looking after your feet, including demonstration. This will cover:
 - why it's important to look after your feet (**slide 42**).
 - how to look after your feet (**slide 43**).

See additional notes (page 32)

Medication

15 minutes

1. **Show slide 44**. Discuss the medications taken by your group and why it is importance that participants take them at the correct time. Ask the group whether they have any questions about the medicines they take. Your community pharmacist could lead on this session if they are available.

See additional notes (page 34)

Tea break - if running session in the afternoon

1. Have tea, fruit juice and fruit ready for your group. You can use this time to reinforce key messages from session 1:
 - (a) **Healthy eating & Physical activity**
 - remind the group 'what is healthy eating'
 - group discussion - any new opinions on advantages/disadvantages of healthy living, or further barriers to healthy living identified?

(b) 'The Chinese Balance of Good Health' poster

- discuss the poster - has this helped?
- discuss portion sizes - using pictures and/or examples - how are the group managing their portion sizes?

2. You could also answer any questions your group might have so far regarding session 2.

Diabetes and your daily life

25 minutes

1. Show Slide 45 and 46 - Your family. Explain that participants can get their family involved by:

- shopping for healthy foods
- cooking healthy meals
- doing physical activities with you e.g. going for walks
- having the same healthy lifestyle as you
- being interested in your diabetes
- listening and talking to you about how you're feeling
- reminding you to take your medicines and test your blood glucose

2. Show slide 47 - Religion (this slide may be omitted/ skipped if none of the participants fast for religious reasons). Find out how many of the group fast for religious reasons. If some of the group do fast, then discuss fasting and looking after their diabetes. Explain to your group that:

- although people with diabetes may not be expected to fast, we know that many of you will wish to fast. you should be able to fast safely as long as you talk to you doctor or nurse before you start your fast and agree a plan with them giving you advice on fasting; medicines and what you should the end of the fast
- if diabetes is treated by diet only, fasting should not cause any problems
- if you take tablets you will need to check with your doctor or nurse about when to take your medicines and how much to take
- at the end of the fast you may want to include starchy foods as shown in the Chinese balance of good health poster under the "bread and cereal group"
- and have more sugary drinks. This will make your blood sugar rise so again talk to your dietitian, doctor or nurse about what you should do

3. **Show slide 48 - Driving.** Ask participants if they have any questions about driving. Motor insurance companies need to know if a driver has diabetes. If participants take tablets or insulin, they must, **by law**, tell the DVLA. They can be contacted in writing at:

DVLA
Swansea
SA99 1TU

4. **Show slides 49-50 - Travel.** Ask your participants if they have any questions about travelling and whether they travel abroad. You should discuss tips for travelling, including the following:

- eat usual meals, carry out usual physical activities and medication routines as much as you can
- plan ahead for any changes to your meal times (when crossing time zones etc)
- keep your medicines and medical equipment with you when travelling
- take extra medicines and prescriptions with you
- take food and some sort of sugar with you when travelling (biscuits, cereal bars, sandwiches, cartons of unsweetened fruit juice, glucose tablets, boiled sweets)
- take a signed letter from your doctor with you explaining your treatment
- know how to get emergency medical help in the country you are travelling to
- take some currency for the country you are going to so you can buy food and drink

Further information is available in Diabetes UK 'Travel and Diabetes' booklet.

5. **Show slide 51 - Employment.** Discuss employment with your group; ask what they do? Any difficulties they might have experienced at work because of their diabetes? Also ask them if there is any other work related issues that they would like to talk about? You should mention the following:

- **some jobs have blanket bans on diabetes** - Airline Pilot, jobs requiring a Large Goods Vehicle (LGV) or Passenger Carrying Vehicle (PCV) license, Fire Service, Police Service, Train driving, Working at height and the Armed Forces

- they should be prepared to treat a hypo at work - let colleagues know how they can help
- **taking time off** - try to arrange your various medical appointments for the same morning, give your employer advance notice of any planned absences, keep your employer informed and don't use diabetes as an excuse for absence when you are absent for any other reason, when you are ill seek prompt medical attention
- **applying for jobs** - if the application has a section about your health you should declare that you have diabetes. If there is no health section, tell the interviewer(s) at the end of your interview. Answer any queries about your diabetes honestly and positively and show that you are in control of your diabetes

6. Show Slide 52 - Eating out, special occasions and & festivals -

At many festivals and special occasions a larger variety of foods will be available. Discuss with your group how often they eat out or go to special occasions and festivals. Ask your participants about the types of foods available and discuss ways of eating healthily at these gatherings.

Recommend that your participants talk to their local dietitian if they want further advice about healthy eating at special occasions.

8. Show slide 53 - Smoking - Discuss with your group the risks of smoking when you have diabetes. Smoking:

- damages your blood vessels and cause blindness and kidney problems
- increases your chances of heart attack, stroke and damage to your feet or legs
- when you have diabetes, increases your risk of the above conditions by up to 4-9 times

Discuss with your group the benefits of giving up smoking. Arrange referrals to healthcare professionals who can help people give up smoking where applicable.

Sexual health - see additional notes (page 35)

Review of personal targets

5 minutes

1. Show slide 54 - ask your group how they got on with achieving their personal dietary and physical activity targets. Set new/same targets for the next session as appropriate. You should conduct a quick review of your participant's food diaries and ask them to keep diaries for the coming week and bring them to session 3 for discussion.

End session

10 minutes

1. **Show slide 55 - Group discussion** - ask your group if there is anything that they didn't understand in session 2 or, whether they have any further questions.
2. **Take group suggestions** for session 3.
3. **Set the date, time and venue** for session 3
4. **Physical activity** - engage your group in some form of physical activity, for example, walking, dancing.

Lunch - (morning session only)

1. Invite participants to stay for lunch. You can use this time to reinforce key messages from session 1:
 - (a) **Healthy eating & Physical activity**
 - remind the group 'what is healthy eating'
 - group discussion - any new opinions on advantages/disadvantages of healthy living, or further barriers to healthy living identified?
 - (b) **'The Chinese Balance of Good Health' poster**
 - discuss the poster - has this helped?
 - discuss portion sizes - using pictures and/or examples - how are the group managing their portion sizes?

You could also answer any further questions your group might have regarding session 2.

Additional notes for session 2

Blood Sugar (Glucose) Testing

1. Explain to your group that keeping good control of their blood sugar (glucose) levels and blood pressure (see below) greatly reduces their chances of developing complications from diabetes. Discuss the different types of testing:

- at home
- in primary and secondary care

2. **Testing at home** - Explain that this gives an accurate picture of blood sugar at the time of the test. Discuss how to test and give a demonstration if possible. Discuss when and how often testing should be carried out. Advise participants that their target is to have blood sugar (glucose) levels of:

- 4 - 7 mmol/l before meals
- under 10 mmol/l after meals

3. Discuss with your group the importance of learning how food, activity and medicines can affect your blood sugar (glucose). Also discuss getting occasional high or low results. Possible reasons for these include:

- getting a high result after a hypo because you have eaten extra carbohydrate or glucose to treat it
- having an illness can affect your results
- extra physical activity can cause a low reading
- stress and hot weather can also affect your results

4. Stress that if levels blood glucose levels remain consistently high or low that participants must talk to their doctor or nurse. Discuss the importance of testing blood glucose levels regularly. You can also note that it understandable that people with diabetes can get fed up testing, but that it is imperative that they test regularly, even if all tests results are satisfactory over a long period of time.

5. **Testing at the NHS (HbA1c)** - Explain to your group that when they have a diabetes check up, a blood sample for HbA1c is taken. This test is quite different to the tests that they conduct at home because it lets healthcare staff establish what their average blood sugar level has been over the past 3 months. A result of 7% or below is the target HbA1c.

Looking after your feet

6. **Why do I need to look after my feet?** - Explain that diabetes can cause damage to your feet and legs. Spending a few minutes each day looking after your feet can help prevent problems occurring in the future.

7. **How do I look after my feet?** - There are 7 things people with diabetes can do:

- look at and feel your feet every day
- wash your feet every day
- be careful not to burn your feet
- make sure your toenails are short
- look out for corns and calluses
- check your shoes & socks before putting them on
- don't smoke

8. **Looking at and feeling your feet** - Ask them to check their feet to see if there are any:

- cuts
- scratches
- swellings. Or to see if the skin looks;
- inflamed or;
- discoloured

(a mirror may come in handy for this)

Note: You should advise participants that if they can't see very well they should ask someone else to check their feet for them.

9. Advise your group that they need to check their feet for:

- lumps
- swellings
- hot or cold spots

10. **What do I do if I find anything unusual?** - They must contact their podiatrist or doctor. If it's a cut or a scratch, they must keep it clean until they see their podiatrist or doctor. They should rinse the cut/scratch with water and cover it with a plaster.

11. Advise participants to wash their feet every day:

- use lukewarm water and mild soap
- dry feet well, but gently
- don't forget to dry between your toes
- put moisturising cream on your feet, but **not** between your toes

12. Be careful not to burn your feet - Many people who have diabetes cannot feel heat, cold or pain very well in their feet. They must be extra careful not to burn their feet:

- don't put your feet too near a fire or against a radiator
- always check how hot your bath is by using your elbow before you get in
- be careful using hot water bottles
- remember to turn off your electric blanket before going to sleep

13. Keeping your toenails short - advise your group:

- cut your toenails straight across
- don't cut or 'dig' into the corners of your nails

14. Explain that if participants have any problems cutting their nails OR if they have reduced feeling or circulation in their feet they must ask their podiatrist for help. If they have any doubts they must seek advice.

15. Corns and calluses - advise your group:

- not to treat corns and calluses themselves
- not to cut them
- not to use corn remedies
- always ask your podiatrist to treat corns and calluses

16. Check your shoes and socks before putting them on - Participants should be advised to check their shoes and socks or stockings for damage every time they put them on as any cracks, small stones or broken toenails can irritate and damage their skin.

17. What type of shoes should I wear? - Let your group know that lace-ups, with soft uppers are a good choice. They should always make sure that any shoes they wear are a good fit with room at the toes. This lets the foot muscles work properly and helps prevent foot rubbing. People with diabetes should always get their feet measured when buying new shoes. They should only wear new shoes for 1-2 hours at first to break them in.

18. Don't smoke!! - Smoking can compound poor circulation problems. People with diabetes should be provided with advice and leaflets on how to stop smoking. Let them know that further advice and leaflets are also available from their local health centre.

19. Medication - Discuss whether anyone in the group is currently taking medication for diabetes.

20. For those who are not currently taking medicines for diabetes:
Explain that diabetes is a progressive condition and that at some point they may be prescribed tablets/insulin to help combat their diabetes. It is therefore important to talk about medicines with everyone in the group.

21. For those who are taking medicines:

Pharmacists play an important role in advising on medication management. Make sure your group understand the medicines that they are taking. Discuss that you understand that it can be difficult for someone to take all of their tablets regularly. Reasons can include:

- remembering to take their tablets (give advice on ways to do this)
- not understanding how their tablets help (explain this)
- side effects (discuss)
- feeling unwell (discuss)

22. Discuss diabetes tablets and other medicines and:

- what to do if you forget to take a tablet
- what to do when you are unwell

23. Explain to everyone that tablets are not used instead of diet and physical activity. People with diabetes still need to have a healthy diet and be physically active to take control of their diabetes.

24. Moving on to insulin - Explain to your group that even if they have a healthy diet and take diabetes tablets regularly, there may come a time when their diabetes control is not as good as it was. If this happens, their doctor will recommend that they take insulin in order to improve control. It is worthwhile mentioning again at this point that diabetes is a progressive disease which may get more serious over time. About 30% of people with Type 2 diabetes treat it with insulin injections. Discuss with your participants their feelings about this. Are they feeling scared, or feeling guilty that they have not controlled their diabetes better? Discuss their concerns about using insulin. Inform the group that most insulin prescribed today is genetically engineered 'human' insulin, which doesn't involve the use of any animal or human products. Tell your group that they should raise any concerns about the type of insulin prescribed with the doctor who prescribes it.

Diabetes & your daily life

25. **Sexual health** - This can be a sensitive topic and you may not feel that it is appropriate to discuss it in a group setting. Ensure that sexual health information is given to the group (leaflets) along with details of a confidential contact for further advice and help.