



St John

Here for Life

Diabetes 15 healthcare essentials

People managing diabetes and diabetic complications have a greater risk of falling and serious injuries. Here's a checklist to help you manage your diabetes and help reduce the risk of you falling.

- 1** Get your blood glucose levels measured at least once a year. An HbA1c blood test will measure your overall blood glucose control and help you and your diabetes healthcare team set your own target.
- 2** Have your blood pressure measured and recorded at least once a year, and set a personal target that is right for you.
- 3** Have your blood fats (such as cholesterol) measured every year. Like blood glucose levels and blood pressure, you should have your own target that is realistic and achievable.
- 4** Have your eyes screened for signs of retinopathy every year. A special digital camera is used to take a photograph of your retina (at the back of your eye) and a specialist will look for any changes. This free test is part of the annual diabetic screening service and is different to the checks carried out by an optician. If you notice any changes between appointments it is important to contact your optometrist or GP.
- 5** Have your feet checked. The skin, circulation and nerve supply of your feet should be examined annually. You should be told if you have any risk of foot problems, how serious they are and if you will be referred to a specialist podiatrist or specialist foot clinic.
- 6** Have your kidney function monitored annually. You should have two tests for your kidneys: urine test for protein (a sign of possible kidney problems) and a blood test to measure kidney function.
- 7** Have your weight checked and your waist measured to see if you need to lose weight.
- 8** Get support if you are a smoker including advice and support on how to quit. Having diabetes already puts people at increased risk of heart disease and stroke, and smoking further increases this risk.

- 9** Receive care planning to meet your individual needs. You live with diabetes every day so you should have a say in every aspect of your care. Your yearly care plan should be agreed as a result of a discussion between you and your diabetes healthcare team, where you talk about your individual needs and set targets.
- 10** Attend an education course to help you understand and manage your diabetes. You should be offered and have the opportunity to attend courses in your local area.
- 11** Receive care from a specialist paediatric team if you are a child or young person.
- 12** Receive high quality care if admitted to hospital. If you have to stay in hospital, you should still continue to receive high-quality diabetes care from specialist diabetes healthcare professionals, regardless of whether you have been admitted due to your diabetes or not.
- 13** Get information and specialist care if you are planning to have a baby as your diabetes control has to be a lot tighter and monitored very closely. You should expect care and support from specialist healthcare professionals at every stage from preconception to post-natal care.
- 14** See specialist diabetes healthcare professionals to help you manage your diabetes. Diabetes affects different parts of the body and you should have the opportunity to see specialist professionals such as an ophthalmologist, podiatrist or dietitian.
- 15** Get emotional and psychological support. Being diagnosed with diabetes and living with a long term condition can be difficult. You should be able to talk about your issues and concerns with specialist healthcare professionals.

