

TYPE 1 DIABETES

PATIENT/FAMILY INFORMATION SHEET

What is type 1 diabetes?

Type 1 diabetes is a disease in which the body no longer has the ability to produce the hormone, insulin. This results in blood sugar (glucose) levels being higher than normal. Insulin must be replaced so that the body can process foods correctly and maintain near normal blood sugar levels.

What causes type 1 diabetes?

The exact cause of type 1 diabetes is still not clear. In some individuals with certain genes, an illness can trigger the body's own immune system to destroy the Beta cells in the pancreas where insulin is made.

What are common symptoms of type 1 diabetes?

Common symptoms of type 1 diabetes may include the following:

- increased thirst
- unexplained weight loss
- feeling tired
- abdominal pain
- blurred vision
- increased urination
- increased hunger
- dry, itchy skin
- slow healing cuts or sores
- nausea, vomiting

How do I know if I have type 1 diabetes?

The diagnosis of type 1 diabetes is made by your physician. Your physician will order a blood test to measure the glucose in your blood. The diagnosis is made if:

- You have the symptoms of diabetes: the presence of increased thirst, increased urination and unexplained weight loss plus a non-fasting blood sugar of more than 200 mg/dl occur, on more than one occasion, *or*
- Fasting blood sugar is more than 126 mg/dl on more than one occasion.

How can I control my blood sugar if I have type 1 diabetes?

Controlling blood glucose involves three “tools”:

- medication
- good food choices
- physical activity

Your healthcare team can help you develop and individualize these tools to achieve good blood glucose control.

What medication is used to treat type 1 diabetes?

Replacing the insulin your body cannot make is the treatment for type 1 diabetes. Your physician will prescribe a types and amount of insulin based on blood sugar levels, lifestyle and food preferences. It is not unusual for insulin doses to be changed over time in order to achieve good blood sugar control.

Who is on my healthcare team?

My physician: _____

My diabetes educator: _____

My dietitian: _____

My physical therapist
or exercise physiologist: _____

My pharmacist: _____

Notes/Other Self-Management Goals:

For more Patient Education Fact Sheets, see the Greenwich Hospital web site at www.greenwichhospital.org and click on Patient Education