



## Season's Greetings to All Our Readers

This is our last Newsletter of 2017, so the Trustees and staff wish all our readers best wishes for Christmas and the New Year. We would also like to thank you for your support throughout the year, it is very much appreciated by us all.

If it is your first Christmas with diabetes, you may feel apprehensive as food is a major part of the seasonal celebrations, so we have Christmas Tips to help you.

## Christmas Tips

Christmas is a mixture of many things – presents, excitement for children [and adults] and a busy time for adults. But if you or a member of your family has diabetes, Christmas can be a worrying and stressful time too, especially if this is your first time with diabetes. Celebrating Christmas is not just a time for presents but also about food! We all eat a lot more than we should and we tend to eat much more of the sort of food that is not exactly ideal for children or adults with diabetes. It doesn't matter whether you are taking tablets for Type 2 or insulin for Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes, you can't take a day off from it but it is important to remember that it is a time to be enjoyed with family and friends.



*A charity supporting and listening to people who live with diabetes*



## Remember!

- Excitement tends to lower blood glucose levels.
- Stress tends to raise blood sugars.
- Eating more than usual can raise blood sugars.
- Exercise lowers blood sugars, so a walk after a big Christmas dinner will help to lower them.
- Try to keep meal times as near as possible to your usual times but if meals are later, then remember to have a snack.
- Maintain your blood glucose testing routine as far as possible and test more often if you're eating frequently or at irregular times.
- Stay active - exercise reduces stress, burns excess calories and helps control blood sugars.
- Pamper yourself – whether this is taking a relaxing bath or curling up with a book, make time for yourself as this can help to prevent holiday stress from building up. Get plenty of rest to prevent holiday tiredness.
- Planning – make sure that you have enough insulin and other medications to cover the Christmas and New Year holidays.

If you would like more information about managing over the Christmas period ask for a copy of our NEW BOOKLET – DIABETES AT CHRISTMAS, using the details at the end of this newsletter.



# Making Your Resolutions Stick!



A lot of us put on a bit of weight over the festive period and come January 1st many of us make a promise to ourselves to lose some weight. However, many of us have also had the experience of those good intentions falling by the wayside when real-life kicks back in. There are many different diets to choose from and whichever you choose, here are some tips to help you keep your New Year Resolution:

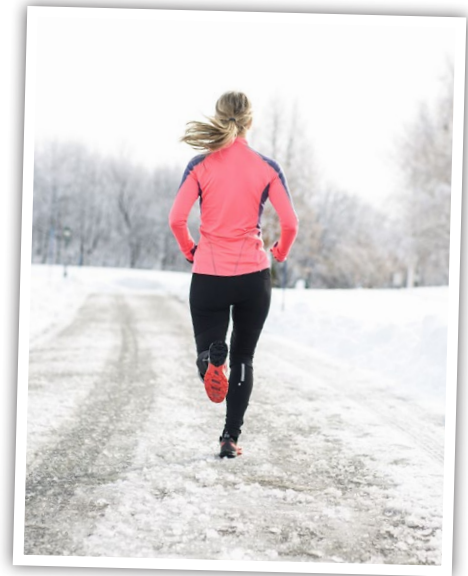
Make a goal and decide how much weight you would like to lose. This goal may seem a long way off, so it helps if you break it down into mini-goals, for example, weekly goals. That way you can see the progress you are making and are more likely to remain

motivated and positive.

Use family and friends for support. Alternatively you could join a slimming club. Having a strong support network, that gives you positive feedback, means that you are more likely to succeed.

Try not to go hungry. Filling up on low-carb or carb-free foods will keep you satisfied and your motivation up.

Make a list of the foods you like most and think about how you cook them. For example, rather than deep frying chips, try baking them using low-fat cooking spray. With a bit of research you can even find healthy versions of takeaway classics – ours is chicken chow mein. This



will help you lose weight and maintain the impetus to reach your goals.

If you are going to start exercising as part of your New Year Resolution, go at your own pace. Don't run the risk of exhausting yourself and giving up.



# A bit more about Sweeteners

Following our article about sweeteners, we received several telephone calls asking why we had not mentioned all the different brands of sweeteners. This was because it would have made the article too long, so we just gave examples of the more common ones that use only one type of sweetener. Many of the brands also use a combination of different sweeteners. Our advice is

that if you want to know which sweeteners are in a particular product then read the ingredients list.

One of our readers also pointed out that we had omitted to mention a naturally occurring sweetener that has become available. Stevia is made from the Stevia Plant (*Stevia rebaudiana*). One teaspoon contains 0.5g carbohydrate, of which 0.02g are sugars, providing 2kcal of energy.



## Remember the flu jab!



People with diabetes take priority for having the flu jab and they are also entitled to a pneumonia vaccination.

### **Flu vaccine may help keep people with diabetes out of the hospital**

People with Type 2 diabetes who have the flu vaccine may be less likely to be hospitalised for cardiovascular or respiratory problems, according to study carried out at Imperial College, London.



The researchers examined 7 years of records on almost 125,000 people in England with Type 2 diabetes, both during the flu season and the summer months. Vaccination was associated with:

- 30% lower hospital admission rates for stroke,
- 22% lower rates for heart failure,
- 15% lower rates for pneumonia or influenza.

Most severe influenza complications occur in the elderly and people with long-term conditions such as diabetes, heart disease and asthma. Peoples who had the flu vaccine had 24% lower death rates from all causes during the study period.

A limitation of the study was it is possible that people who get vaccinated are healthier in other ways. Nevertheless, the findings suggest that having the flu jab is beneficial for people with diabetes.

(CMAJ, July 25, 2016)



# Ways you can look after your feet

While correct professional help at the right time is essential for the care of your feet, there are ways to take care of them at home to help you to prevent problems arising. Here are just some ways that can be useful.

## Diabetes - Friendly Socks

Our Comfort Socks have been developed for use by people with diabetes, vascular disorders and other circulatory problems. No elastic is used in the top of the sock, relying only on the gentle control of the rib for support. We also produce a Fuller Fitting Longer Sock for people who find it difficult to wear ordinary socks. These are made with a large circumference top and are suitable for people who may be suffering from conditions such as oedema.



Both socks come in a range of sizes

- The Comfort Sock comes in small [4-7], medium [6 1/2-8 1/2], large [9-11] and x-large [11-13].
- The Fuller Fitting Sock comes in small [4-7], medium [6 1/2-8 1/2], large [9-12].

Both are manufactured as a unisex sock from a high quality cotton blend. They both come in a range of colours - grey, navy, white, black and beige.

The Comfort Socks retail at £8, the Fuller Fitting at £12 per pair including p&p and can be purchased from our website shop, <http://www.iddt.org/shop> or by phoning IDDT on 01604 622837.

## Flexitol



## neuropad®



neuropad® can detect early complications of the feet which can lead to foot ulcers and even amputation. The test is completely painless and is an early warning system for your feet. Diabetes can result in the sweat glands not producing enough moisture, leading to dry and cracked feet.

**solesee™**  
focusing on foot health

### Helping you to check your feet everyday

**YOU SHOULD CHECK YOUR FEET EVERY DAY**

*Solesee has been specifically designed for people with diabetes to check the soles of their feet.*

- Easy to use independently
- Large shatterproof mirror
- Set at the perfect angle to see the whole of the bottom of your foot
- Portable and lightweight

...also contains a handy guide on what you should be looking for on your feet

Solesee can be purchased online at [www.solesee.com](http://www.solesee.com) or on the IDDT online shop at [www.iddt.org/product/solesee](http://www.iddt.org/product/solesee)

### Diabetes can damage the nerves in your feet

This common complication can sadly lead to blisters or wounds which go unnoticed, become infected and result in difficult-to-treat ulcers and potential amputations.

In England alone, there are **more than 7,000 amputations** every year related to 'diabetic foot'

VibraTip, a clever tool invented in NHS, quickly and easily helps to identify nerve damage in the feet. With the help of a friend or family, regularly checking feet for loss or changes in protective sensation is possible.

If you think there are any irregularities in the way your feet feel or appear, you should always consult your doctor.

**VibraTip®**

Available from IDDT website <http://www.iddt.org/shop> or by phoning 01604 622837  
McCallan Medical Ltd - [www.vibratip.com](http://www.vibratip.com)

A neuropad® is stuck to the sole of each foot like a small sticking plaster and left in place for 10 minutes. The pad is blue to start with and should turn pink in the presence of moisture from sweating. If the neuropad® patch stays blue, or if it turns a patchy blue/pink, this indicates that you may have some level of diabetic peripheral neuropathy and your sweat glands are not working properly.

Two test pads cost £14.99 and can be purchased from our website shop, <http://www.iddt.org/shop> or by phoning IDDT on 01604 622837.

# Different Diets

By Dr. Mabel Blades, Dietitian



These days there seems to be a plethora of different diets promoted. Many are advocated by various food bloggers as well as other personalities. Indeed, I turned on the radio in the car to hear someone advising “do not eat beige food”. This left me wondering about shades of beige and how different foods like chickpeas, porridge, granary bread and pasta fit in!

Many of the diets are all about helping people to lose weight or eat more healthily but many are based on a lack of scientific evidence. While hospital catering colleagues do try to accommodate various diets for therapeutic reasons, it is difficult for them to provide for many of the more unusual diets which are followed as a lifestyle choice, other than by picking and choosing from the main menu. In general people find some “rules” about what to eat and what not to eat helpful, as it gives a context within which to make choices.

However, there are some well-known and validated diets which are described briefly alongside the others. **An important point is that you should check with your health professional before embarking on any diet that may affect your diabetes.**

## A Range of Diets

**The Paleo Diet** is said to be reflective of what our hunter gatherer ancestors ate, so is based on meat and fish as well as eggs, fruit and vegetables. It obviously contains no processed or refined foods, nor does it include milk or dairy foods, potatoes or grains, such as wheat or oats. Thus, it is a high protein diet.

**Dukan Diet.** This is another high protein, low carbohydrate diet which is usually aimed at promoting weight loss. It has been criticised as it can lead to side effects, such as constipation.

**Ketogenic Diets** are high in fat and low in carbohydrate and cause the body to produce ketones and thus are not suitable for people with diabetes. Interestingly, sometimes ketogenic diets are used to manage epilepsy and sometimes seizures particularly in children. However, in such situations, the diet is managed by a dietitian and special food products are prescribed.

**DASH Diet** stands for **Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension** and originated in America. Research has found it to be extremely helpful in lowering blood pressure as well as preventing coronary heart disease, stroke and Type



2 diabetes. It is based on reducing saturated fat, sugars and salt and promoting fruit, vegetables and whole grains. There is clear guidance and it is easy to implement.

**The Low FODMAP Diet** is low in **Fermentable Oligo, Di and Monosaccharides and Polyols** which are all different types of carbohydrate. For some people these can be poorly absorbed and ferment in the digestive tract causing



gas to be produced and symptoms of bloating and irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) to occur. This diet originated in Australia and was then well researched at Kings College in London. It is not the easiest diet to follow but is often implemented in stages. It can be extremely helpful to some people who have had agonising problems with IBS with reports that after following the regime, they said they no longer have

IBS the regimen!

**Note:** the 5/2 Diet is based on 2 days of fasting followed by 5 days of normal eating. It is advised that the 2 days are separate in the week and the 5 days of normal eating should be a normal healthy diet and not gorging on fatty and sugary foods! However, logic suggests that this is not suitable for people with diabetes but can be helpful for weight loss.

**Remember!**

**Always check with your health professional before starting a different diet!**



## The winners of IDDT's lottery draws!



We are delighted to announce the winners of the draw of our monthly lottery for August 2016.

### They are as follows:

- 1st prize of £336.96** goes to Colin from Swindon
- 2nd prize of £252.72** goes to Anon. from Newcastle upon Tyne
- 3rd prize of £168.48** goes to Peter from Bromsgrove
- 4th prize of £84.24** goes to Anon. from Ross on Wye

### Winners of the September 2017 draw are:

- 1st prize of £353.28** goes to Martin from Hornchurch
- 2nd prize of £264.96** goes to Anon. from Milton Keynes
- 3rd prize of £176.64** goes to Anon. from Bingley
- 4th prize of £88.32** goes to Geoffrey from Doncaster

### Winners of the October 2017 draw are:

- 1st prize of £450.04** to Denise from Birmingham
- 2nd prize of £337.52** goes to Kenneth from Tonyrefail
- 3rd prize of £225.02** goes to ANON from Bournemouth
- 4th prize of £112.55** goes to Margaret from Southwold

Note: the winners of the draws for November, December and January will be announced in our March 2018 Newsletter and will be available on our website.

### Thank you to everyone who joined in IDDT's lottery.

If you would like to join in for just £2.00 per month, then give us a call on 01604 622837 or email [tim@iddtinternational.org](mailto:tim@iddtinternational.org)

## Christmas cards

Don't forget that it isn't too late to order your IDDT Christmas cards. You can do this using our on-line shop or contact us directly using the details below. You might also want to take advantage of the special Christmas discount we are offering on our book – Diabetes, Food, Meds and More.



### If we can be of help in any way, please contact:

InDependent Diabetes Trust (IDDT), PO Box 294, Northampton NN1 4XS

Tel: 01604 622837 email: [enquiries@iddtinternational.org](mailto:enquiries@iddtinternational.org) Or visit our website: [www.iddtinternational.org](http://www.iddtinternational.org)