



Welcome

to the 45th issue of Type 2 & You

In this issue we continue our series of articles on different types of medicines for Type 2 diabetes and we also continue with our series of articles on the 9 key annual health checks to which people with diabetes are entitled. In this issue, we write about HbA1c tests, understanding what it is and what the results mean. We also write about news from the diabetes world. As usual, we will also update you on our latest round of lottery winners. We also give you another reminder about the flu jab as it is especially important this year for people with diabetes.

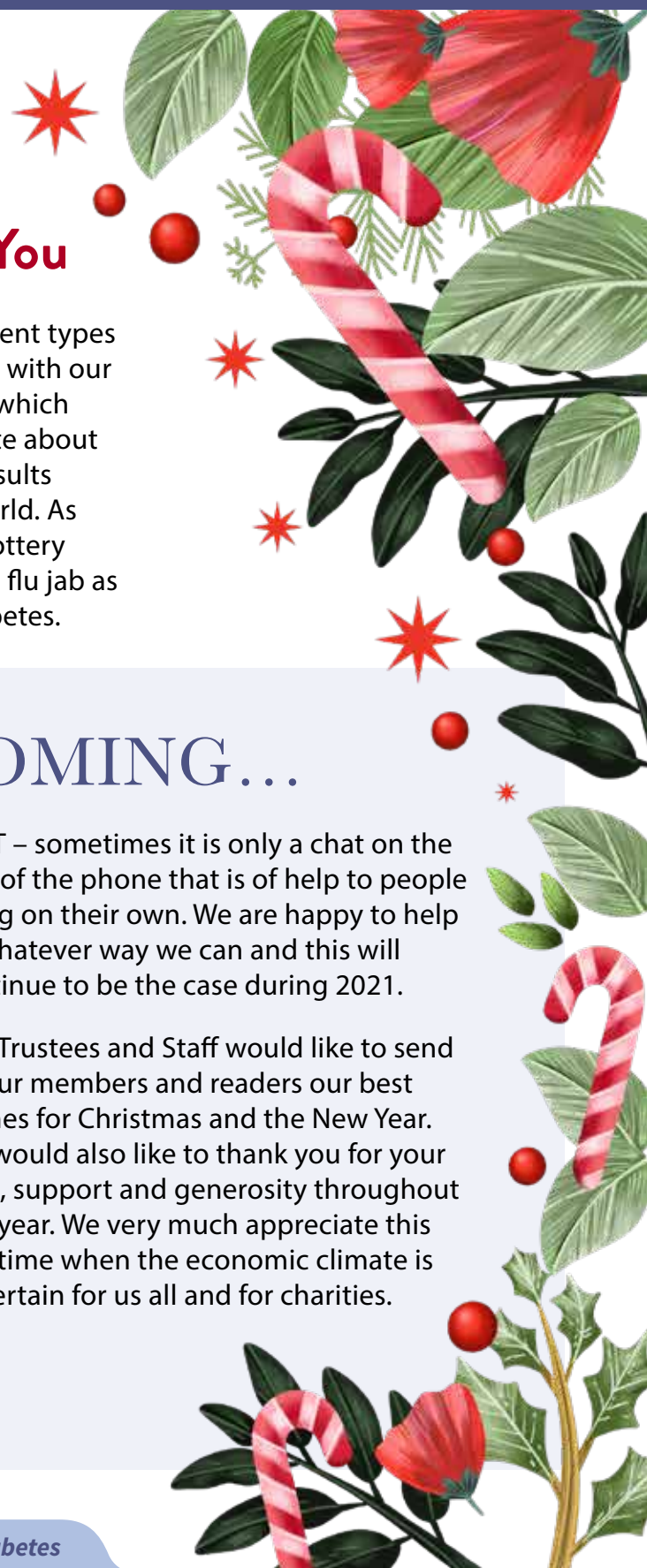
CHRISTMAS IS COMING...

This is the final Newsletter of 2020 and what a year it has been for all of us. At the time of writing this Newsletter, none of us know what Christmas and New Year will be like, especially as there are different rules in various parts of the country.

Without doubt, 2020 has been a difficult year for us all. If not directly affected by Covid-19, then many people with diabetes have been affected by not receiving the health checks they need, by not receiving help and information when they need it or by being on a long waiting list for surgery. We hope that we have been able to offer help, advice and reassurance to the many people who have contacted

IDDT – sometimes it is only a chat on the end of the phone that is of help to people living on their own. We are happy to help in whatever way we can and this will continue to be the case during 2021.

The Trustees and Staff would like to send all our members and readers our best wishes for Christmas and the New Year. We would also like to thank you for your help, support and generosity throughout this year. We very much appreciate this at a time when the economic climate is uncertain for us all and for charities.



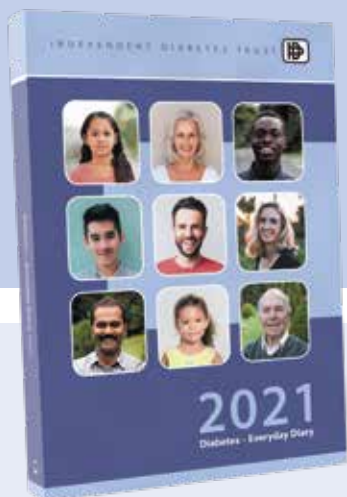
Christmas Tips

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

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



Just to remind you...



2021 Diabetes Everyday Diaries still available!

Last year we published our Everyday Diary for anyone who lives with diabetes, whether you have diabetes, your partner has diabetes or your child has diabetes and this proved very popular, so we have published a similar Diary for 2021. Each page is divided into two columns, the left column is headed, "Diabetes Diary" for recording blood glucose tests, mealtimes, medication and so on. The right column is headed "Everyday Diary" for recording things like medical appointments, social events and family occasions.



IDDT Shopping List

This Shopping List is new this year. It has a magnet on the back to attach to your fridge door for easy jotting down and so it will not get lost! On one half of the page you plan your meals for each day and on the other half you write down the items you need to buy. This is a tear off section to take to the shops with you or to order your online shopping. It works well with the 28-day meal planner in IDDT's FREE booklet, "Diabetes Everyday Eating".



Christmas cards

We would like to thank everyone who has already bought Christmas cards from us and remind those who haven't that we still have cards available, they are £3.25 per pack of 10 plus 80p per pack p&p.

Take a look at the leaflet included with this Newsletter entitled 'Thinking about Christmas' for gift ideas and support IDDT!



Bits & Pieces

FLU VACCINATIONS

The NHS has announced that over 30 million people are to be vaccinated. This year it is particularly important to protect people in 'at risk' groups from flu and to support the NHS by reducing hospital admissions. It is reassuring to know that all vaccines undergo 3 stages of clinical trials and are assessed by the medicine regulator for safety, effectiveness and quality before they are given to patients.

A free flu vaccine is available to:

- people aged 65 and over
- pregnant women
- people with some pre-existing conditions
- all school year groups up to Year 7
- household contacts of those on the NHS shielded patient list.

The NHS will contact people directly, including information about where to go to get the vaccine.

FOR 2019

Our Annual Report and Accounts for 2019 were externally audited for the first time and due to the pandemic and people working from home, this has taken longer than usual. Added to this, we have had to cancel our Conference and Annual General Meeting. However, for the people who are interested, the Annual Report and Accounts are available on our website but if you would like a paper copy, then we are very happy to send one to you – just use the information at the back of this Newsletter.

RYBELSUS

A new oral drug for Type 2 diabetes

Semaglutide is a drug that has to be injected and is used to treat Type 2 diabetes when other drugs have been tried but without success. This year Rybelsus was introduced and this is the first version of semaglutide that can be taken by mouth. This is important for people who are needle phobic or do not want to inject. It belongs to the class of drugs called GLP-1 agonists. It is used together with diet and exercise and works by helping the pancreas to release insulin when blood sugar levels are high.

DOSAGE

Rybelsus is a tablet to be taken once a day.

- It should be taken on an empty stomach at any time of the day.
- It should be swallowed whole with a sip of water and should not be split, crushed or chewed.
- Patients should wait at least 30 minutes before eating or drinking or taking other oral medicinal products.
- It can be taken with other medicines for the treatment of Type 2 diabetes. This may cause hypoglycaemia (low blood sugars) so the doctor may reduce the dose before Rybelsus is started.

HOW MUCH TO TAKE

The starting dose is one 3 mg tablet once a day for one month. After one month, the doctor will increase the dose to 7 mg once a day. The doctor may increase the dose to 14mg once a day if blood sugars are not well enough controlled.

ADVERSE EFFECTS

Like all drugs there could be side effects and common ones include nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea which usually go away over time.

Rybelsus is not the same as insulin and should not be used in people with Type 1 diabetes or in people who develop diabetic ketoacidosis (very high blood sugars).

- DIABETES -

Your 9 Key Tests Explained

PART 2

This is the second in a series of articles we are presenting in *Type 2 & You* about your 9 annual key tests to which you are entitled under the NHS Constitution and recommended by the National Institute of Health and Clinical Care Excellence (NICE). The aim of these tests is to take a measure of how well your diabetes is managed, in both the short and longer term, and to provide advice about continued support.

In each article we will try to explain what the tests and what they test for, how are they carried out and by who and how you get the results. Just to remind you, the 9 Key Tests are:

- Weight measurement
- Blood Pressure
- Smoking Status
- HbA1c
- Urinary Albumin
- Serum Creatinine
- Cholesterol levels
- Health of eyes
- Health of feet

I hope in these articles we can shed some light on their purpose. In this second article we look at the HbA1c test, what it is and what the results mean.

WHAT IS THE HbA1c TEST?

HbA1c is known as glycated haemoglobin. This occurs when haemoglobin, the oxygen carrying red blood cells, becomes bonded with glucose in the blood stream – this is called glycation, in other words, the glucose in the blood sticks to the red cells.

When your body can't use sugar properly

more of it sticks to your red blood cells. If blood glucose levels have been higher, then more red blood cells have glucose attached to them and the HbA1c result will be higher. Red blood cells exist for around 3 months, so the HbA1c test only shows the average blood glucose levels for the previous 8 to 12 weeks.

HOW IS THE HbA1c TEST CARRIED OUT?

The HbA1c test is different from a finger-prick test because this gives tells you what your blood glucose level is at the time that you do it. The HbA1c test is carried out by your doctor or nurse taking blood from your arm and then obtaining the results from a lab.

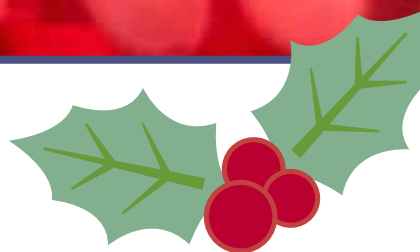
Your HbA1c should be tested every 3 to 6 months. It might be done more often if your blood glucose levels are changing quickly. You should be told your HbA1c result after each test and it is given in a unit of measurement that is written as 'mmol/mol'.

WHAT IS A HEALTHY HbA1c LEVEL?

- A healthy person will have an HbA1c level under 42 mmol/mol (below 6.0%),
- Pre-diabetes ranges from 43-47 mmol/mol (6.0% to 6.4%),
- 48mmol/mol or over is the diabetic level (6.5% or over).

Recommended HbA1c levels for people with Type 2 diabetes

Your healthcare professional will set a target HbA1c level for you to try to achieve. This target may differ from person to person according individual needs.



- For adults with Type 2 diabetes managed by lifestyle and diet or by lifestyle, diet and one drug that doesn't cause hypoglycaemia, metformin, then the recommended HbA1c is 6.5% (48mmol/mol).
- For those treated with a drug that may cause hypoglycaemia, an HbA1c of 7.0% (53mmol/mol) is recommended.
- If HbA1c levels are not adequately controlled by a single drug and rise to 58mmol/mol (7.5%) or higher, then your healthcare professional may suggest intensifying your treatment with a second drug.

HbA1c CONVERTER

This is just to remind you that the HbA1c measurements were changed some years ago but the old measurements are still used in some countries. Some people and some articles are still using the old measurements so it is important that we are aware of both.

Here is a table showing the old DCCT measurements, the new IFCC measurements, and the average blood glucose measurements you can expect to be associated with each particular level of HbA1c

HbA1cs MAY BE RELAXED FOR SOME PEOPLE ON A CASE BY CASE BASIS

There are situations where your healthcare professional may recommend raising your target HbA1c levels and these are:

- if people are older and/or frail and at risk of falls,
- if people have impaired awareness of hypoglycaemia,
- in people who drive or operate machinery as part of their job,
- in people who have other illnesses in addition to diabetes.

LIMITATION OF THE HbA1c TEST

HbA1c tests are usually reliable but there are some limitations in its accuracy. One example is that if people have certain forms of anaemia, they may not have sufficient haemoglobin for the test to be accurate. In such cases, there is another test that can be used and this is known as a fructosamine test.

HbA1c (DCCT) Current measurement (%)	HbA1c (IFCC) Measurement from June 2011 (mmol/mol)	Average blood glucose level for this HbA1c, mmol/L
6	42	7.0 (range 5.5-8.5)
7	53	8.6 (range 6.8-10.3)
8	64	10.2 (range 8.1-12.1)
9	75	11.8 (range 9.4-13.9)
10	86	13.4 (range 10.7-15.7)
11	97	14.9 (range 12.0-17.5)
12	108	16.5 (range 13.3-19.3)
13	119	18.6 (range 14.6-21.1)

Are the elderly being overlooked?

We recently received the following from one of our members and his wife:

We recently received the following letter from one of our members and his wife:

My wife (83) and I (85) both have Type 2 diabetes. We were both due our annual reviews in July but our surgery told us we must wait until September. Two weeks ago, we attended the surgery for blood samples to be taken. This meant waiting outside of the surgery in the rain. When we asked about the actual reviews, we were told to expect a phone call, and that is what we got. We were told that blood tests were satisfactory and that it was not possible to carry out any further review matters. So, nothing else has been checked! Surely checking of blood pressure is important as are the other items listed on your last issue of Type 2 & You. I also need attention to my hearing aids but that department is seeing nobody.

I know the NHS has big problems but I am of the opinion that (in Wales) they are now happy to overlook elderly people! As things are, I have not seen a GP for several years as all work here seems to be in the hands of nurses. Should I see a doctor at some point?

Judging by the phone calls to IDDT, this couple are not the only ones who wonder about elderly people being overlooked!



Recycle 4 Charity

Recycle Your Ink Cartridges and Help Support The InDependent Diabetes Trust

Did you know that you can help us raise funds simply by recycling your ink cartridges via our Recycle4Charity programme?

For each inkjet cartridge recycled via the programme we will receive a £1 donation, meaning you can help the environment whilst raising money for the InDependent Diabetes Trust!

To start, all you need to do is go to the address shown below and sign up for your free account.

Register now at – www.recycle4charity.co.uk/Register/C6505

How It Works



Sign Up & Select Your Charity

Sign up for your free account and select which charity you would like to support



Order Freepost Recycling Materials

Order recycling bags or boxes depending on how many cartridges you have to recycle



Post Us Your Ink Cartridges

Pack your cartridges up and send them to us for free



We Send Money To Your Charity!

Your charity of choice will earn for each cartridge received from the wanted list

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 oedema, for example.



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.

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.

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.



solesee™
focusing on foot health

Helping you to check your feet everyday

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

YOU SHOULD CHECK YOUR FEET EVERY DAY



- 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 🦶

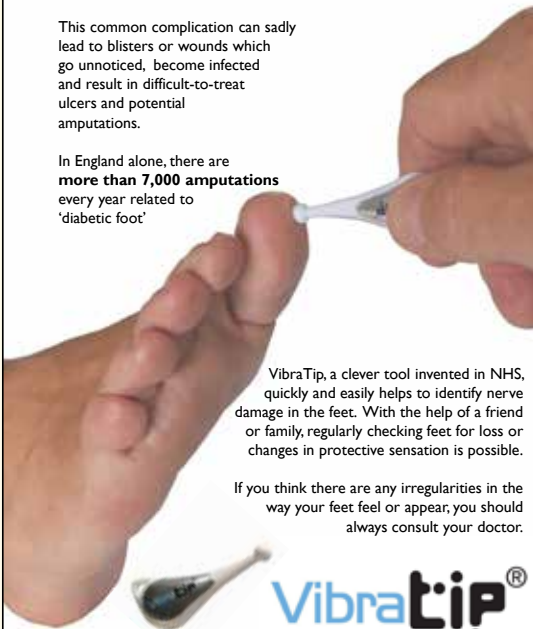
...also contains a handy guide on what you should be looking for on your feet

Solesee can be purchased online at www.solesee.com or on the IDDT online shop at 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 01 604 622837
McCallan Medical Ltd - www.vibratip.com



THE IDDT'S LOTTERY DRAW WINNERS

We are delighted to announce the winners of our latest monthly lottery draws. They are as follows:

Winners of the August 2020 draw are:

- 1st prize of £584.16** goes to Anon. from Exeter
- 2nd prize of £438.12** goes to Patricia from Waltham Abbey
- 3rd prize of £292.08** goes to Anon. from Hereford
- 4th prize of £146.04** goes to Anon. from Baschurch

Winners of the September 2020 draw are:

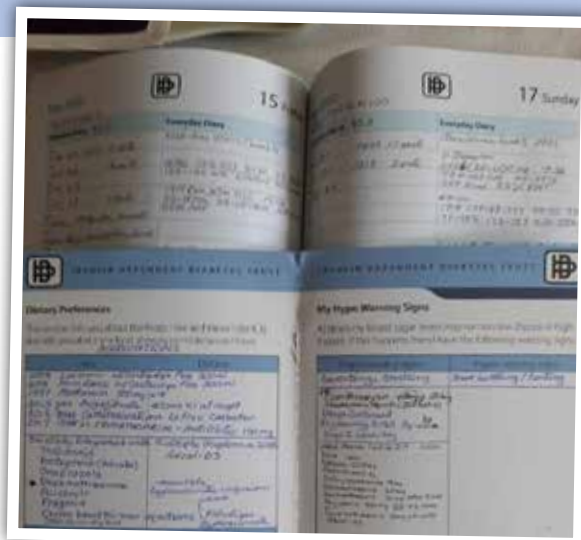
- 1st prize of £570.72** goes to Anon. from Bournemouth
- 2nd prize of £428.04** goes to Gerry from Huntingdon
- 3rd prize of £285.36** goes to Geoff from Bristol
- 4th prize of £142.68** goes to Ruth from Gloucester

Winners of the October 2020 draw are:

- 1st prize of £566.40** goes to Neville from Holmfirth
- 2nd prize of £424.80** goes to Colin from Andover
- 3rd prize of £283.60** goes to Patricia from Swindon
- 4th prize of £141.60** goes to Claire from Bristol

Note: The winners of the draws for November and December 2020 and January 2021 will be announced in our March 2021 Newsletter and on our website. A huge 'Thank You' to everyone who supports IDDT through the lottery.

If you would like to join in for just £2.00 per month, then give us a call on 01604 622837 or email jo@iddtinternational.org



My three important management tools for Lynwood

It has been a while since I communicated with you! Since July 2018 I not only have Type 2 diabetes but also multiple myeloma. I want you to know that three of the most important tools in my life are the IDDT Everyday Diary, my Chemo Book and my IDDT Hospital Passport. I find the Diary very useful with enough space being given for recording insulin injections, physical activity, meter readings and medication notes. I find physical activity, communicating with others around me and keeping a positive attitude has helped me. I am still maintaining a good balance.

Thank you for your help and stay well and stay safe.

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
Or visit our website: www.iddtinternational.org