DOCTOR DISCUSSION GUIDE

Managing Type 1 Diabetes

Type 1 diabetes is an autoimmune disease in which people cannot make their own insulin. People with type 1 diabetes can lead long, healthy lives by managing their blood sugars and keeping up with their physician appointments. Understanding diabetes terminology and knowing which questions to ask when you see your doctor can help to educate you and lessen the challenges of this disease.

Vocabulary to Know
Your doctor might mention these common terms. Here's what they mean.

Basal Rate	The amount of insulin you need to keep blood glucose within normal range when at rest. Basal insulin is often referred to as "background insulin" and can be in the form of long-acting insulin via injection or small amounts of short acting insulin via pump.
Blood Glucose Monitoring	A method of testing your blood glucose which requires a small sample of blood, usually extracted by a finger stick. People with type 1 diabetes usually check their blood sugar multiple times a day. Monitoring your daily blood sugar can help you to fine tune your insulin needs, pattern manage, and keep your diabetes in good control. Your target blood sugars will be given to you by your physician.
Diabetic Ketoacidosis (DKA)	A serious condition that can lead to coma or death which develops when ketones build up in the blood. Ketones are produced when the body does not have enough insulin to use glucose, the body's normal source of energy.
Glucagon	A hormone produced by the alpha cells in the pancreas. It raises blood glucose. People with type 1 diabetes will be prescribed an injectable form of glucagon to be administered only for emergency situations when a person is experiencing severe hypoglycemia.
Hemoglobin A1C	Also referred to as glycosylated hemoglobin, a blood test that measures a person's average blood glucose level over the past two to three months. This test can be used to diagnose diabetes, as well as monitor control and adjust treatment regimens.
Insulin pump	A small device that allows users to set small amounts of insulin to be delivered throughout the day (basal) and larger boluses of insulin to correct blood sugars or for meals. The pump connects to a narrow, flexible plastic tubing that ends with a needle inserted just under the skin. There are many different types of insulin pumps with special features.
Postprandial Blood Glucose	Often referred to as after-meal blood sugar. This is the blood sugar level taken one to two hours after eating.
Site Rotation	An important concept to ensure adequate insulin absorption. For people with diabetes who take multiple insulin injections daily or use an insulin pump, rotating where they inject insulin on their body will be important for blood sugar control.

Questions to Ask

These questions will help you start a conversation with your doctor about managing your type 1 diabetes.

About Symptoms

- ❑ What are the symptoms of high blood sugar?
- ❑ What are the symptoms of low blood sugar?
- ❑ What are the symptoms of diabetic ketoacidosis?
- ❑ How do I know when to check for ketones?

About Causes & Risk Factors

- ❑ Is type 1 diabetes genetic?
- ❑ Neither myself nor my husband has diabetes, why did my child develop this?
- ❑ Should I do genetic testing for my other children?
- ❑ Is it true that there is no known cause for type 1 diabetes?

About Diagnosis

- ❑ What tests are done to confirm diagnosis?
- ❑ How does a hemoglobin A1C work?
- ❑ What does it mean to have antibodies?

About Treatment

- ❑ How often do I need to take insulin?
- ❑ What is the difference between basal and bolus insulin?
- ❑ Do I need to take insulin for every carbohydrate?
- ❑ How do I calculate carbohydrates? Are there apps or resources for carbohydrate counting?
- ❑ How do I treat high blood sugar? What about low blood sugar?
- ❑ Would I benefit from a continuous glucose monitor or insulin pump?
- ❑ Should I see an endocrinologist or other specialist?
- ❑ What do I do if my blood sugar is out of range after meal? Do I correct it?