

Contact details for more information

Monday to Friday 9am-5pm

- Diabetes doctors can be reached via the paediatric secretaries on **01952 641222**, ext. **5980** or **5981**
- Diabetes nurses on **01743 450855 option 2**, text via **ChatHealth 07312 263102** or email **Shropcom.pdsn@nhs.net**
- Diabetes Dietician on **01952 641222** extension **4874**

In an emergency/out of hours

In an emergency during working hours when you cannot reach one of the team above or for out of hours support i.e. after 5pm or at weekends.

All patients requiring advice should contact the Princess Royal Hospital switchboard on **01952 641222** and ask to speak to the paediatric registrar for diabetes advice.

References:

www.diabetes.org.uk/guide-to-diabetes/complications/cardiovascular_disease

www.bhf.org.uk/informationsupport/how-a-healthy-heart-works

Managing Type 1 Diabetes

Keeping your Cardio Vascular System Healthy



Cardiovascular Disease

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is a general term for conditions affecting the heart or blood vessels.

What does your heart do?

Your heart is roughly the size of a fist and sits in the middle of your chest, slightly to the left. Your heart pumps blood all around the body in blood vessels called arteries and veins. Blood is the transport system for our bodies. Blood picks up and carries oxygen and nutrients to where they are needed. It also picks up waste products and helps transport them out of the body.

The left side of the heart pumps blood that contains oxygen around the body through arteries. When blood passes through the intestines, it picks up nutrients that have been absorbed from food. Blood travels from arteries into capillaries. These deliver oxygen and nutrition to every cell in the body and pick up waste products including carbon dioxide. Veins take the blood back to the right side of the heart. It is then pumped to the lungs. The lungs absorb the carbon dioxide and the blood absorbs the oxygen. It then travels back to the left side of the heart, ready to be pumped around the body again. The heart is so strong that this whole process only takes about one minute.

How can I look after my cardiovascular system?

Taking care of your heart is an essential part of managing your diabetes.

- Eat a healthy diet and keep active.
- Keep your blood glucose levels, blood pressure and cholesterol within your target range.
- Attend all your medical appointments.
- Have your annual blood tests.
- Don't start smoking, or get help to stop smoking.
- Keep a healthy weight

Why are people with diabetes more at risk?

If you have high blood glucose levels for a period of time, even slightly high, your blood vessels can start to get damaged. This is because your body can't use the glucose properly, so it sticks to the red blood cells and builds up in your blood. Fats, known as cholesterol, within the blood stream can also build up with the blood glucose. This build up can block and damage the vessels carrying blood to and from your heart, starving the heart of oxygen and nutrients.

How does my diabetes team check for cardiovascular problems?

At every clinic we will do an HbA1c check to see what how much glucose is stuck to the red blood cells and a blood pressure check. Everyone should have an annual diet review. From aged 12 years, as part of your annual review, additional checks will be done on your blood, to check the level of cholesterol.

What if my blood test is abnormal?

If your cholesterol level is abnormal your diabetes team may decide to repeat the test, especially if you had eaten just before the test. If it remains raised you will be encouraged to review your diet and lifestyle with the dietitian. Sometimes you need to take medication to manage cholesterol levels. These are called statins, taken as a daily tablet. This will be to reduce your risk of developing cardiovascular disease. Statins are the most commonly prescribed medication in the UK. They work to lower the level of cholesterol in your blood

Is Cardiovascular disease treatable?

Prevention is the best way to avoid cardiovascular disease, following the steps in this leaflet and managing blood glucose levels, eating well and keeping active will help you to do this.