Get the best care possible for diabetes

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Categories: Impact, Netwellness

Q: My father, 62, was just diagnosed with diabetes. Although he doesn't have the greatest lifestyle habits, he is scared about the diagnosis and wants to make some changes. Part of his concern is that he doesn't even know where to begin. What kinds of things should he make sure his doctor does to get the best care?

A. Diabetes is one of the most important health conditions and one that affects more and more people every day. According to the Center for Disease Control's most current report (June 2008), 24 million people in the United States have diabetes and one quarter of the people who have diabetes don't know they have it.

Getting Quality Care

The key to quality diabetes care is making sure you're keeping important health measures in the safety zone and getting the routine care you need to prevent complications. Health measures that are important to the best diabetes care include:

- Sugar (glucose) Control (Hemoglobin A1C)
- Blood Pressure Control
- Cholesterol Control
- Weight Control (Body Mass Index "BMI")
- Not Smoking
- Screening for Kidney Disease
- Eye Examination
- Foot Examination
- Vaccine to Prevent Pneumonia

You and your father can learn more about each of these measures and how they relate to diabetes by clicking on the links above. Talk to the doctor to be sure he's getting the tests and care that are right for him.

For more information on quality care visit Better Health Greater Cleveland.

Build a Team

Even though diabetes is common, it can lead to serious health problems throughout the body including heart attack, blindness, leg amputation and kidney failure.

The important thing is that even though your father has diabetes there is so much he and his doctors can do to prevent these conditions. Part of preventing...
complications is getting the right members on his healthcare team, and giving him
the encouragement to make progress, one small step at a time. Remember that
when it comes to good care, no one can do it alone and everyone on the team has
a role to play.

Your father's health care team should be available to help him manage his diabetes
and maintain good health, but the most important member of the team is HIM. Not
only does he care for his diabetes every day, but he also play a lead role in the
health care team.

Members of the health care team include your dad, his primary care provider, a
dietitian, eye doctor, podiatrist, dentist, social worker and other care givers.

As a patient with diabetes, he has to make sure all information makes sense to him
and that his health care team members are in good communication with one
another.

Some health care providers even offer group appointments where other people with
diabetes and multiple members of his health care team participate at the same
time.

Posted by hurting on 07/23/08 at 11:33AM

I became a diabetic when I was forty and had surgery. I went into the
operating room not a diabetic and came out a diabetic. Doctors were
wonderful but what has been great for me is having a friend or mentor
who is a diabetic so you have someone to talk to. And compare. This is
most helpful.

Inappropriate? Alert us.