Why Routine Is Important for Diabetes Management

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Stability in Health

Diabetes can be managed easier if you have a plan and follow a routine. Diabetes can cause significant fluctuations in your insulin levels and they can affect your work and personal life. Take medications at specific times, exercise and rest properly to control this condition better. Let's look at developing a diabetes routine.

Why Do Your Blood Sugar Levels Increase?

First, it is normal to see fluctuations in the blood glucose levels, and do not worry if you notice occasional spikes. Several factors influence insulin levels, for example, your diet (not just what you eat but also when), medications (including prescription, vitamins and supplements), physical activity, stress levels, infections or other medical conditions. In other cases, blood glucose levels increase for no obvious reason.

Food and drinks are the most common reason. You may have a juice or a coffee sweetened with sugar or a bagel with your breakfast and when you check the blood glucose levels you will see a quick rise of the normal values.

If you experience significant stress levels or an illness (even a harmless cold or flu) the insulin levels can go up. Medications also influence the biochemistry of your body and how the hormones fluctuate. If, for example, you take cortisone injections for arthritis or another condition, they can cause a rapid and significant rise in your blood glucose levels.

Physical activity also has a huge impact and is associated with higher levels of glucose (as well as an increase in your blood pressure, heart and respiratory rates and more), because this way your body adapts to the exercise.

The Value of HbA1c

Rather than looking at individual spikes in insulin levels, your doctor will order a test called HbA1c. This test shows how well your diabetes is controlled long-term, over a few months. The value of HbA1c is more important because it can predict your risk of developing complications of diabetes such as kidney, heart, eyes or nerve complications.

Pay attention to HbA1c levels and keep them at less than 7%.

When Blood Glucose Levels Can Be a Concern

You should seek medical attention if you develop signs that your insulin levels are too high or too low. Concerning symptoms include dizziness or fainting, intense stomach pain with nausea, blurred vision, severe headaches, confusion, inability to move or lack coordination, cold clammy hands, anxiety, significant thirst and increased urination.

Keep a Diary

When you take your blood sugar tests, write down whether or not you took them before or after a meal (and how many hours after that meal). Also note if you worked out, had been stressed, took any medications or how well you slept the night before.

Bring your diary to the doctor at your next appointment so the medication can be adjusted accordingly. The dosage may be changed or a new drug can be added (a variety of insulin shots are available, some have short actions, some medium and others long, and the doctor will choose the ones that will decrease the glucose fluctuations).