



Preparing for surgery if you have diabetes

Our aim is to work with you to make your operation a success – and to get you back to normal activities as soon as possible. This leaflet gives you some advice on how to best prepare for your surgery if you have diabetes.

The importance of making sure your diabetes is well controlled

Good control of your diabetes is important so that you can reduce the risk of complications associated with high blood sugars. This is particularly the case when undergoing surgery, as poor control leads to increased complications as well as an increased length of stay in hospital. You will know if your diabetes is well controlled by the result of a blood test known as HbA1c. If your HbA1c is less than 69 mmol/mol, this reflects acceptable control over the previous 8-10 weeks. Ideally, it should be between 48 and 58mmol/mol.

Most recent HbA1c (if known): _____

If you have Type 1 diabetes

- Take your insulin regularly and balance your intake of carbohydrate against your insulin.
- Control your weight.
- Keep active.
- Consult with your doctor (GP or specialist) or diabetes nurse. They can help, and can refer you to the following if necessary:
 - **CarbAware course:** *This is a 3-hour course introducing you to ‘counting carbohydrates’, and giving you a special testing meter which can help you calculate the right dose of insulin.*
 - **CHOICE** is a 4-day intensive course, run on 4 days on consecutive weeks. It will give you all the information and tools you need to take full control of your diabetes.
 - **Specialist diabetes clinic:** *In addition, your GP or nurse can ask for advice from our community consultant or one of the community diabetes specialist nurses. **Don’t be afraid to ask your GP or nurse to refer you or ask for help if they need it.***

If you have Type 2 diabetes

- Take your medication regularly.
- Control your weight – if you are overweight, reducing your weight will improve your diabetes control.
- Keep active – simple activities like walking, climbing the stairs instead of taking a lift, cycling and swimming will all bring your blood glucose levels down and will help you to lose weight.
- Consult with your doctor (GP or specialist) or diabetes nurse they can help, and can refer you to the following if necessary:
 - **X-PERT** is a 6-week course, run at different locations in Reading, Wokingham and West Berkshire. Each session is 2½ hours long and they may be in mornings, afternoons or evening. These courses provide an excellent opportunity for you to understand your diabetes better and get it really well controlled.
 - **Specialist diabetes clinic:** In addition, your GP or nurse can ask for advice from our community consultant or one of the community diabetes specialist nurses. **Don't be afraid to ask your GP or nurse to refer you or ask for help if they need it.**

Whatever type of diabetes you have

- Know your cholesterol level. Statin medication helps protect the heart.
- Have your blood pressure checked regularly. Good blood pressure levels protect the heart and kidneys.
- Do not smoke. Smoking is highly damaging but much more so when combined with diabetes. Both thicken the blood, encourage plaque formation and put a strain on the heart.

Further information

Further help can be found at the Berkshire West diabetes website:

www.berkshirewestdiabetes.org.uk or Diabetes UK website www.diabetes.org.uk

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

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