

Diabetes

Quarterly NEWSLETTER

Fall 2006

The mission for this newsletter is to provide current diabetes information on various diabetes supplies, medications and resources for the staff of Marquette General Health System. Information given is an overview. It does not necessarily denote an endorsement of such. Additional references can be provided for more comprehensive information. Suggestions for future topics as well as feedback about the newsletter can be submitted by interoffice mail to Sarah Balko, Diabetes Education, by phone at ext. 3473 or via Lotus Notes email. You can also access this newsletter on Lotus Notes.

Continuous Glucose Monitoring

Blood glucose monitoring and insulin management advancements continue to be made at a rapid pace. One of the newest tools we have is the continuous glucose monitor. The continuous glucose monitor system (CGMS) by Medtronic is an FDA approved device that records glucose levels throughout the day and night with up to 288 glucose readings per day.

A tiny glucose sensing device is inserted in the abdomen, just under the skin. It is very similar to the insertion of an insulin pump catheter. The sensor measures the level of glucose every 5 minutes and sends information to a pager sized device, worn

at the waistline. After 72 hours, the sensor is removed and the data is downloaded to a computer. A meeting is then scheduled with a diabetes educator to go over the results and make adjustments as needed to the current treatment plan.

The CGMS provides a detailed picture of glycemic patterns in a logical, graphic format which helps pinpoint trends in glucose levels. This helps capture dangerous overnight lows, high post prandial spikes, and/or early morning hyperglycemia.

The CGMS is not intended for day to day monitoring or long term use. It is used periodically to discover trends in glucose levels and to identify fluctuations that would otherwise go unnoticed with fingerstick blood glucose checks. CGMS can help to increase knowledge of the relationship between food, activity, and blood glucose levels thus increasing diabetes self-care behaviors.

The Medtronic CGMS is available by physician referral through MGHS Diabetes Education. Most insurances do cover this service with a physician order. Contact Sarah Balko, RD, CDE at ext. 3473 for more information.

Diabetes and the Inpatient

A new team, the Acute Diabetes Management Team, has come together at MGHS to provide the structure and educational resources needed for evidence-driven care of the diabetic patient while in the hospital. This Team, consisting of various professionals, has as their goal to increase the use

of nationally recognized standards of care in the treatment of the diabetic or hyperglycemic patient. Their activities are anticipated to cover education, including that of physicians, nurses, dieticians, patients and families; the management of patient's glycemic control; the creation of standardized order sets; and establishing the basic Standards of Care/ Practice of the Diabetic or Hyperglycemic Patient.

Educational endeavors have already begun and will soon intensify. A mini-conference is scheduled for November 28th at MGHS (call ext. 3470 for more information) and attendance is encouraged by anyone who cares for patients with diabetes. Orders sets are near completion and will be made available. And baseline data collection has begun. This program will have the added benefit of meeting future regulatory agency goals before they become mandatory. It is also our goal to become a Center of Excellence in the care of the diabetic patient. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Nan Spawr-Seaton on beeper 701 or via lotus notes email.

New Website!

MGHS Diabetes Education has updated their website. Information about diabetes and the diabetes services offered by MGH across the Upper Peninsula can be found at www.mgh.org/diabetes/index.html

New on the website is an 'Ask the Educator' section. Questions about diabetes or diabetes related complications can be posted and a Diabetes Educator will post a reply.



Nutrition Corner



Carb Counting

Carbohydrate counting is used by many as a way to control blood sugars, lose weight, and/or dose insulin. In the past, diabetes was treated by the avoidance of sweets and sliding scale insulin use. Now, we know all carbohydrates affect the blood sugar basically the same. Diabetes can be controlled by counting carbs, not avoiding them and insulin can be dosed accordingly to better match the physiological need of the body. It is important that all health professionals know about carb counting, for consistency of care in those with diabetes.

Starches and sugars are carbohydrates. Starch is found in breads, pasta, cereals, potatoes, beans, peas, corn, and other grains. Natural sugars are found in fruits and milk. Added sugars are in desserts, candy, jam, and other sweets. All of these foods are carbohydrates. The body converts all of these foods into glucose regardless of the type. Every 15g of carbohydrate is counted as 1 choice. An example of 1 carb choice is 1 slice of bread, ½ cup corn, 1 small apple, ½ cup orange juice, 1 cup milk, or 2 small cookies. In meal planning, a Registered Dietitian can figure out how many carb choices are needed per meal and the patient then has the flexibility to choose the choices he/she wants to eat.

Insulin is now being dosed based on grams of carbohydrate eaten or carb choices instead of blood sugars. This is closer to how the bodies pancreas would normally work. That is why it is necessary to know about carb counting especially if you care for individuals with diabetes. For more information or to schedule a teaching session for staff contact Sarah at ext. 3473.