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Licking Memorial Health Systems

1320 West Main Street
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this month's report on patient
care quality. You'll soon discover
why Licking Memorial Hospital
is measurably different
for your health!*

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**Licking Memorial
Health Systems**

August 2002
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**Diabetes
Care**

measurably
different
for your
health!



HEALTH TIPS

According to the American Diabetes Association, diabetes often goes undiagnosed because many people with symptoms of the disease do not seek treatment. However, recent studies have shown that early detection and treatment can decrease the chance of developing diabetes-related complications. Contact your family physician if you regularly experience any of the following symptoms:

- Frequent urination, excessive thirst, extreme hunger, unusual weight loss, increased fatigue, irritability, or blurry vision.

...a community report on patient care quality.



Diabetes care:

How do we compare?

At Licking Memorial Hospital, we take pride in the care we provide. To monitor the quality of that care, we track specific quality measures and compare them to benchmark measures. Then we publish them so you can draw your own conclusions regarding your health care choices.

1 The Community Case Management (CCM) program at Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) provides free services to people in the community with diabetes. The program monitors quality indicators to make sure patients are receiving the best care possible. The American Diabetes Association recommends a person with diabetes have a blood test called a Hemoglobin A_{1c} (HbA_{1c}) at least every six months to monitor glucose levels. The two most frequent reasons a diabetic may not get an HbA_{1c} are that the test is not ordered or that the person did not go to the laboratory for the test.

	LMH 2001 ⁽¹⁾	LMH 2002 ⁽²⁾	LMH Goal
% CCM diabetics who obtained an HbA _{1c}	92%	95%	>90%

2 Each diabetic has a different treatment plan, depending on the type and severity of the disease. For those who should have a decrease in HbA_{1c} levels, LMH measures if they met their goal. Other diabetics are monitored to stay within the normal limits.

	LMH 2001 ⁽¹⁾	LMH 2002 ⁽²⁾	LMH Goal
% CCM diabetics with a decrease in HbA _{1c} or within normal limits	68%	66%	>80%

3 The American Diabetes Association established the target HbA_{1c} level for diabetics at 7 percent or less.

	LMH 2001 ⁽¹⁾	LMH 2002 ⁽²⁾	LMH Goal
% CCM diabetics with HbA _{1c} 7% or less	41%	39%	>50%

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Much of the care a diabetic receives is in the outpatient or physician office setting. The physician offices of Licking Memorial Health Professionals measure the most critical indicators for diabetes. These include receiving an HbA_{1c} test every six months and receiving each of the following annually: an eye exam; a complete lipid profile, including cholesterol check; a microalbuminuria test to monitor kidney function; and a foot exam.

% LMHS diabetics having HbA _{1c} test	
LMH 2002 ⁽³⁾	State ⁽⁴⁾
87%	78%

% LMHS diabetics receiving eye exam	
LMH 2002 ⁽³⁾	State ⁽⁴⁾
73%	69%

% LMHS diabetics having lipid profile	
LMH 2002 ⁽³⁾	State ⁽⁴⁾
87%	75%

% LMHS diabetics having microalbuminuria test	
LMH 2002 ⁽³⁾	State ⁽⁵⁾
71%	26%

% LMHS diabetics having a foot exam	
LMH 2002 ⁽³⁾	State ⁽⁵⁾
69%	65%

Data Footnotes:

(1) Based on 214 diabetic patients in the CCM program June 30, 2001.

(2) Based on 184 diabetic patients in the CCM program June 30, 2002.

(3) Based on 1656 diabetic patients seen by LMHP physicians in May-June 2002.

(4) State data from Ohio Ambulatory Diabetes Project, Aggregate Report based on April 1999-March 2001 data. State averages reflect measuring lipid and eye exams every two years and HbA_{1c} annually.

(5) State data from Ohio Ambulatory Diabetes Project, based on baseline measurement, April 2000.

Living well with **Diabetes**

A PATIENT'S STORY

Michael Barsotti was 8 years old when he was diagnosed with diabetes. Although he's now 46, he hasn't forgotten what it was like to be a youngster who was "different." "Of course, back then, I didn't really know what it meant to have diabetes," Michael said. "I snuck candy and stuff all the time. I didn't know how dangerous that could be."

Although his paternal grandfather had diabetes and his parents were familiar with the symptoms, Michael said they didn't readily recognize them in him. "My parents knew the signs because of my grandfather. But I was drinking pop 'til it came out of my ears. And, it was summer, so I was losing weight," Michael said.

The Newark resident was diagnosed with diabetes at Licking Memorial Hospital in the summer of 1963 and has continued to receive care through the hospital, currently as a patient of Licking Memorial Health Professional Katrina Timson, M.D. "It was pretty rough at first," Michael said of adjusting to life as a diabetic. "My siblings would go out for ice cream, but I couldn't."


He has Type 1 Diabetes (formerly known as juvenile diabetes), which is usually diagnosed in children and young adults. In Type 1 Diabetes, the body does not produce insulin - which is necessary for the body to

be able to use sugar. Insulin moves sugar from the blood into the cells. When sugar (or glucose) builds up in the blood instead of entering cells as it should, the cells can be starved for energy. High blood sugar levels eventually can damage the eyes, kidneys, nerves and/or heart.

Michael is insulin dependent and now takes an insulin shot three to five times daily. Since he gives himself an injection with every meal, the number of shots varies based on his eating schedule. In addition to taking insulin, Michael knows that eating properly and exercising regularly are keys in treating his diabetes. He bench presses at the YMCA of Licking County and at his home. Because of retinopathy (diabetic eye disease), he had to give up another exercise interest - body building.

Retinopathy - which causes deteriorated vision - also has cost Michael his driver's license and has forced him to go on Social Security disability. "I worked two jobs for years, but with retinopathy, I just can't do it anymore," he said. He now depends on friends and the local taxi service to get where he needs to go.

While Michael is well aware of his limitations, he doesn't dwell on them. "There are not a whole lot of things diabetics can't do," Michael said. "Basically, it doesn't stop me from doing a whole lot."



Having diabetes hasn't kept Michael Barsotti from enjoying life. The Newark resident bench presses regularly because he likes to and because he knows that getting regular exercise is a key in treating his diabetes.

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**Basically, it doesn't stop me
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LMHS Diabetes Support

Licking Memorial Health Systems offers a Diabetes Education Class from 2 to 5 p.m. on the first, second and fourth Tuesday of each month in the Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) Auditorium, located on the ground floor of the hospital, 1320 West Main Street, in Newark. During the third week of each month, the class moves to 7 to 9:30 p.m. Wednesday in the LMH Auditorium.

"The class provides useful information – including tips for healthy eating and facts about the latest in diabetes treatment," said certified diabetes educator Ruth Coen, RN, CDE.

Additionally, the Health Systems offers a Diabetes Support Group in which individuals with the disease can meet to share encouragement and healthy recipes. The group meets from 7 to 8:30 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month in LMH Conference Rooms A&B. It is led by Loretta McCollum, R.N., C.D.E., an LMHS case manager and certified diabetes educator. Registration is not necessary.

Individuals with diabetes also are invited to meet with an LMHS registered dietitian if they would like personalized pointers about how to keep their diet on track.

To register for the Diabetes Education Class, or to make an appointment with a Health Systems' dietitian, call 348-4722.



Take Diabetes Seriously

DIABETES IS A DISEASE THAT AFFECTS THE WAY THE BODY USES FOOD. IT KEEPS THE BODY FROM USING SUGAR FROM FOOD FOR ENERGY, CAUSING SUGAR TO BUILD UP IN THE BLOOD. THIS BUILD-UP CAN DAMAGE THE HEART, EYES AND KIDNEYS AND CAUSE DANGEROUS CIRCULATORY PROBLEMS IN THE FEET.

According to national public health statistics, more than 17 million Americans have diabetes – but many are not aware of it. Additionally, many people who have been diagnosed don't take it seriously.

"They say they have 'just a touch of sugar' or are 'borderline,'" said Licking Memorial Health Systems registered dietitian Liz Kaercher, RD, LD, CDE. "Diabetes educators prefer not to hear those terms. We try to encourage the person to accept the diagnosis so that he or she can learn how to control the diabetes with healthy food choices and lifestyle."

Kaercher notes that a person with diabetes can still enjoy some "sweets." But education is the key in keeping safe. One of the very necessary steps in controlling blood sugar is learning the dietary principles. "A person with diabetes will not have good blood sugar control without eating appropriately, even if he or she takes diabetes medication," Kaercher said. "Meeting with a dietitian for a personalized meal plan can have a very positive impact on improving blood sugars quickly."

At highest risk for diabetes are people who are overweight, don't exercise regularly, are older than 45, and are of certain ethnic origins – including African-Americans, Latinos, Native Americans, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. A woman who has had a baby weighing more than 9 pounds at birth also is at increased risk.

"Diabetes is not caused from eating too much sugar," said Ruth Coen, RN, CDE, dispelling a popular myth. Additionally, Coen – a registered nurse and certified diabetes educator with Licking Memorial Case Management – warns that individuals can "feel good" but still have the disease.

"There is no cure for diabetes, but it can be controlled," she said. "Treatment consists of following an appropriate meal plan,

exercising regularly, possibly taking medication, and regularly monitoring your blood sugar at home."

Diabetes Care: What's New?

A number of newly available medications are helping diabetics have better control of their blood sugar levels. Coen noted, "Many people with diabetes say they feel much better after getting their blood sugars closer to normal with the new medicines."

Pills

New pills help the body use insulin better and keep morning sugar levels from increasing as much as they may typically have done, Coen said. Other pills stimulate the pancreas to make more insulin, but medicine is released more slowly. Some pills act quickly to keep the blood sugar down after eating. One type keeps the body from absorbing food too quickly, therefore keeping blood sugar levels from rising as drastically as they typically may.

Insulins

"People with diabetes are getting much better control of their blood sugar with new insulins," Coen said. One example is a basal insulin which is slowly released in the body over a 24-hour period.

Two other new forms of insulin are rapid acting and keep blood sugar levels down after meals. "Diabetes patients are taught to take them according to how much food they are eating," Coen said.

For More Information

Diabetes patients interested in learning more about what's new in diabetes care are advised to contact their family physicians to find out what may work best for them.

"These new medicines are making living with diabetes easier for many people," Coen said.