

Diabetes management in family practice



Prof Paul Rheeder

Chronic diseases pose a particular challenge to the busy general practitioner. As such diabetes is often a complex disease with multiple complications. The therapeutic choices are often challenging and the practitioner must not only aim to control blood glucose but blood pressure and blood lipids as well. There is clear evidence that diabetes will increase and become a major public health problem in both developed and developing countries.¹ Fortunately many studies have provided evidence as to how improve outcomes in these patients.

To help the busy practitioner make sense of all the therapeutic information available this edition of SAFP will focus on management issues in diabetes. A short description of the scope of the problem worldwide is given by myself (Specialist Physician working in diabetes as well as head of the Division of Clinical Epidemiology, Medihelp Chair in Clinical Epidemiology, University of Pretoria).

This is followed by a paper from Dr Danie Van Zyl, a specialist physician and clinical epidemiologist on management of glucose in the patient with Type 2 Diabetes. As physician and researcher his main interest is diabetes care and he is responsible for the Diabetes Clinic of Kalafong Hospital (Department of Internal Medicine, University of Pretoria).

The paper on prescribing insulin in type 1 diabetes by two authors from Cape Town clarifies some of the often difficult issues faced when deciding on insulin use in type 1 diabetic patients. Professor Steve Delpoort is Head of Pediatric Endocrinology at Groote Schuur Hospital and Red Cross

Childrens Hospital and his main interests include childhood and adolescent diabetes, management of pubertal problems, investigation and management of sexual differentiation problems and growth problems. Dr Joel Dave is the Senior Registrar in Endocrinology at Groote Schuur Hospital who's my main research areas are the metabolic complications of antiretroviral therapy, investigation of glucose homeostasis in non-diabetic patients presenting with an acute stroke and osteoporosis in inflammatory bowel disease.

Prof James Ker gives an excellent overview of the management of hypertension in the diabetic patient. Prof Ker (previously academic head of the Department of Internal Medicine and now vice-dean of the School of Medicine, University of Pretoria) has an ongoing interest in hypertension and cardiovascular disease and lectures far and wide on this topic.



Prof Derick Raal is head of the Division of Endocrinology and Metabolism, Department of Medicine, University of Witwatersrand. He heads the lipid clinic at the Johannesburg General Hospital and is a well known authority on lipids in South Africa. He discusses the important issue of management of dyslipidemia in the patient with diabetes.

These papers on management issues in diabetes provide the practitioner with

practical advice that will hopefully contribute to improved care of the many patients with diabetes in our country. We are grateful to the authors who have literally contributed from the South the North to make this diabetes edition possible.

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Reference

1. Wild S, Roglic G, Green A, Sicree R, King H. Global prevalence of diabetes: estimates for the year 2000 and projections for 2030. *Diabetes Care*. 2004; 7:1047-53.