

Your child has an appointment with a clinical psychologist

If your child has diabetes, you may see a clinical psychologist together, as part of the team looking after them. This leaflet explains more about what you and your child should expect from these appointments.

What is a clinical psychologist?

A clinical psychologist is trained to help people who might be having difficulties with how they are thinking or feeling.

Your clinical psychologist is trained and specialises in helping children and people under 18 years old, and will have particular skills in helping young people in a health setting. Your clinical psychologist will work with you and your child to apply new and different ways of thinking. This will help you and your child to cope with the demands of managing diabetes, or bring about changes to improve your quality of life. Clinical psychologists work as part of your multi-disciplinary team, which includes doctors, nurses and dietitians.

What will happen in an appointment with a clinical psychologist?

It is very important to understand that a clinical psychologist is not there to judge you, your child or your parenting skills. Sometimes, when a person hears the word 'psychologist' they think they are going to be judged, evaluated or even mind-read. This is not the case. Clinical psychologists are there to help you and your family.

The psychologist is not there to make any final decisions for you or tell you how to handle your child's diabetes. They are there to discuss concerns you or your child may have about their diabetes or other parts of your lives.

What parts of my child's diabetes can the clinical psychologist help with?

When your child is first diagnosed, the clinical psychologist can be there to help you and your child adjust to the diagnosis. Some families may need more time and space to do this than others, as everyone is very different. The clinical psychologist is there to help not only you and your child, but also siblings and any other family members who may be struggling to cope with this change in family life.

The clinical psychologist can also help you make decisions about treatment and management methods for your child. If your child is of an appropriate age, the psychologist will help you involve your child in these decisions.

It is very common for patients and their families to feel a range of emotions when first diagnosed and any time after diagnosis. These emotions can include anger, sadness, guilt, worry or feeling fed up. The clinical psychologist can help you, your child or any other family member try to overcome these emotions by talking through concerns and issues that they may have.

How long will the session last?

The clinical psychologist will usually sit in on one of your appointments at the diabetes clinic with the other professionals such as the doctor or diabetes nurse. If you see the psychologist separately for any reason (for example, because you are discussing new treatment options or you have any other concerns) these appointments will last around one hour.

How many appointments will there be?

There will be as many appointments as you would like, either within the clinic or in another setting. It all depends on your situation and how much help and support you and your family would like.

If you are considering using an insulin pump, how does the clinical psychologist help with this process?

If you and your child are considering an insulin pump, a clinical psychologist will have a discussion appointment with you. This appointment gives you and your child the opportunity to discuss feelings towards the pump, the benefits/drawbacks it may bring, and any other concerns or issues you both have about the pump. This appointment is not an interview and does not determine whether or not your child is able to go on a pump in the future. It is a way of highlighting concerns and raising any issues that may need to be resolved. The clinical psychologist will be there for as long as necessary to give any further support you and your child may need either before or after going on the pump.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about seeing the clinical psychologist in the diabetes team, please contact us on **t:** 020 7188 4686 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5.30pm). There is a voicemail function on this number; please give your child's name and your telephone number and your call will be returned as soon as possible.

The paediatric diabetes nurse specialists can be contacted on **t:** 020 7188 4617.

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit **w:** www.evelinalondon.nhs.uk/leaflets

Evelina London Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's medicines, please speak to the staff caring for them or contact our helpline.

t: 020 7188 3003, Monday to Friday, 10am to 5pm **e:** letstalkmedicines@gstt.nhs.uk

Your comments and concerns

For advice, support or to raise a concern, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). To make a complaint, contact the complaints department.

t: 020 7188 8801 (PALS) **e:** pals@gstt.nhs.uk

t: 020 7188 3514 (complaints) **e:** complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk

Language and accessible support services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch.

t: 020 7188 8815 **e:** languagesupport@gstt.nhs.uk

NHS 111

Offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day.

t: 111

NHS website

Online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you take control of your health and wellbeing.

w: www.nhs.uk

Get involved and have your say: become a member of the Trust

Members of Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust contribute to the organisation on a voluntary basis. We count on them for feedback, local knowledge and support. Membership is free and it is up to you how much you get involved. To find out more, please get in touch.

t: 0800 731 0319 **e:** members@gstt.nhs.uk **w:** www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/membership

Was this leaflet useful?

We want to make sure the information you receive is helpful to you. If you have any comments about this leaflet, we would be happy to hear from you, fill in our simple online form, **w:** www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/leaflets, or **e:** patientinformationteam@gstt.nhs.uk

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