

tes after a routine annual exam. She attended a class to learn the basic principles of diabetes self-management. Ellen is willing and able to follow lifestyle recommendations for meal planning and activity. In fact, her current lifestyle choices are well aligned with best practice recommendations. Ellen is now taking glimepiride (Amaryl) daily, and she is self-monitoring her blood glucose once daily, alternating before and after meals. Ellen's treatment goals include a fasting blood glucose of less than 130 mg/dL and a hemoglobin A_{1c} of less than 7%.

Louise relies on her caregivers for day-to-day diabetes management. In the assisted living setting, her meal plan is controlled, along with her medication administration and her glucose monitoring routine. She is 5 feet tall and weighs 102 pounds. She has mild renal compromise, controlled hypertension and hypothyroidism. Her highly variable appetite and calorie consumption are of particular concern. These place her at risk for hypoglycemia and undesired weight loss.

Louise is treated with repaglinide (Prandin) before her two largest meals of the day. The nursing staff has been instructed to withhold the drug if Louise is eating poorly and to increase the frequency of glucose monitoring. Given Louise's variable appetite and potential for malnutrition, dietary restrictions are limited to no concentrated sweets. Her goals for treatment include a blood glucose level of less than 180 mg/dL and a hemoglobin A_{1c} of less than 8%. Members of the nursing staff routinely monitor her blood glucose three times per week. Control of blood pressure and lipids is a particular focus, given Louise's history of strokes and vascular dementia. Renal function is monitored with routine lab tests.

Putting It Into Practice

Older adults are a diverse patient population, and their diabetes treatment plans must address age-associated considerations as well as the highly variable characteristics they display. For all patients, the four cornerstones of therapy are dietary interven-

tion, physical activity, pharmacotherapy and self-monitoring of blood glucose. ❖

References

1. Suhl E, Bonsignore P. Diabetes self-management education for older adults: general principles and practical application. *Diabetes Spectrum*. 2006;19(4):234-240.
2. American Diabetes Association. Clinical practice recommendations 2007. *Diabetes Care*. 2007;30(Suppl 1):S9-10, S27.
3. American Geriatrics Society. Guidelines for improving the care of the older person with diabetes mellitus. *J Am Geriatr Soc*. 2003;51(Suppl 5):S265-S280.
4. Zarowitz BJ. Management of diabetes mellitus in older persons. *Geriatr Nurs*. 2006;27(2):77-82.
5. Boyd CM, et al. Clinical practice guidelines and quality of care for older patients with multiple comorbid diseases: implications for pay for performance. *JAMA*. 2005;294(6):716-724.
6. Rendell, M. Type 2 diabetes management in older adults. *Clinical Geriatrics*. 2004;12(5):43-51.
7. Briscoe VJ, Davis SN. Hypoglycemia in type 1 and type 2 diabetes: physiology, pathophysiology, and management. *Clinical Diabetes*. 2006;24:115-121.
8. Murphy JL, ed. *Nurse Practitioners' Prescribing Reference*. New York, N.Y.: Prescribing Reference, Inc.; 2007:144-146.
9. Franz, MJ, ed. *A Core Curriculum for Diabetes Education: Diabetes in the Life Cycle and Research*. 4th ed. Chicago: American Association of Diabetes Educators; 2001:103-128.
10. Williams AS. Talking meters: what's new? *Diabetes Self-Manag*. 2007;24(3):6-16.

Table 3

Diabetes Self-Management Alternatives for Older Adults¹⁰

Treatment Category	Adaptive Approaches	Resources
Meal Planning	No concentrated sweets Plate Method	Idaho Plate Method www.platemetod.com
Activity and Exercise	Low-impact exercises Chair exercises	http://www.aarp.org/health/fitness/work_out/exercise_and_type2_diabetes.html
Medication	Medication organizers Syringe magnifiers Insulin vial holders Insulin pens Prefilled insulin syringes	Independent Living Aids, Inc. www.independentliving.com (800) 537-2188
Self-Monitoring of Blood Glucose	Talking glucose meters Meters with large screens, simplified features Medical identification bracelets	Captek/Science Products www.captek.net (800) 888-7400 Digi-Voice attachment for OneTouch Basic glucose meter and two aids for finger placement Diagnostic Devices, Inc. www.prodigymeter.com (800) 366-5901 Prodigy line of talking glucose meters Pharma Supply www.pharmasupply.com (866) 373-2824 Advocate line of talking glucose meters
Patient Education Materials	Large print, age appropriate	National Diabetes Education Program (NDEP) "The Power to Control Diabetes Is in Your Hands" at http://ndep.nih.gov/campaigns/Power/Power_index.htm ; (800) 438-5383 National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases "Young at Heart: Tips for Older Adults" at win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/young_heart.htm and "Fit and Fabulous as You Mature" at http://win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/mature.htm