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Northumbria Healthcare NHS
NHS Foundation Trust

Do you have Type 1 diabetes?

DAFNE may be able to help you

Type 1 Diabetes: Less guesswork.
More freedom. Better health.

DAFNE

What is DAFNE?

DAFNE stands for:

Dose Adjustment For Normal Eating

It is a way of managing your diabetes by working out how much insulin you need to take for what you want to eat.

It is based on:

- ✔ 2 injections of long-acting (Background) insulin each day
- ✔ Injecting quick acting insulin each time you eat
- ✔ Testing your blood sugar level before each injection.

This approach has been used in Europe since the 1980's and was introduced in Britain in 2000, funded by Diabetes UK. DAFNE is now a nationally delivered programme.

DAFNE has proven to:

- ✔ Reduce HbA1c without increasing the risk of severe hypoglycaemia
- ✔ Increase quality of life
- ✔ Improve satisfaction with treatment.

"It's given me the real reason for doing blood tests."

Further information

For more information or for course dates contact:

Questions you may have for your Diabetes Team

The data on the DAFNE database means we can monitor the effects of DAFNE on your quality of life and overall diabetes control. If you have any questions relating to the DAFNE database please ask one of the DAFNE educators or doctors at your diabetes service.

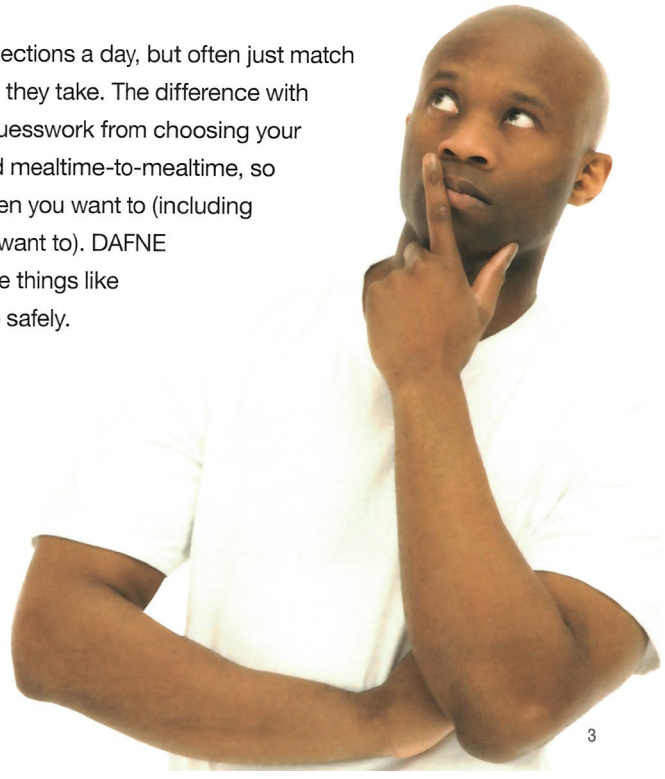
What if I decide it's not for me?

A few people who attended the DAFNE course did choose not to carry on with the whole approach at the end. However, they found the week very useful and the skills learned still help to manage their diabetes day-to-day. Whatever you decide, you will still be offered the same level of support and treatment from your diabetes clinic.

Don't I already do this?

Many people already have 3–5 injections a day, but often just match their food to the amount of insulin they take. The difference with DAFNE is that it takes away the guesswork from choosing your own insulin needs day-to-day and mealtime-to-mealtime, so that you can eat what you like when you want to (including not having to eat when you don't want to). DAFNE also gives you the skills to manage things like exercise, illness and alcohol more safely.

"At last I now have the freedom to choose."



What does it involve?

DAFNE involves attending a 5-day training course (9am–5pm Monday to Friday) or a day a week for 5 weeks with around seven other people with Type 1 diabetes, plus a follow up session around eight weeks after the course and yearly half-day top up sessions. The structured teaching programme covers topics including carbohydrate estimation, blood glucose and ketone monitoring, insulin regimens, eating out, reading food labels, hypos, illness and exercise.

The DAFNE course is about learning from experience. During the week you practice the skills of carbohydrate estimation and insulin adjustment under the supervision of DAFNE trained educators.

Most of the training is built around group work, sharing and comparing experiences with other people with Type 1 diabetes. However, there are opportunities for each person to speak to a doctor, nurse or dietitian individually.

"Everyone should be offered the opportunity to do this."

Questions you may have for your Diabetes Team

What are the costs?

Structured education is now seen as part of routine diabetes care, you will not be charged for DAFNE. In 2002 the government asked the National Institute for health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) to provide guidelines on structured education for diabetes management. NICE is the independent organisation responsible for providing national guidance on the promotion of good health and the prevention and treatment of ill health.

In 2003 NICE issued their guidance as a Technical Appraisal (number 60) and as of January 2006 all Primary Care Trusts had to offer all people with diabetes high quality structured education, such as DAFNE.

In March 2011, NICE launched quality standards for diabetes in adults. Provision of structured education which meets national criteria is one of the 13 quality statements within this document. You may need to reorganise family commitments or take time off work to do the course. However, we can provide a letter of explanation for your employer.

What else is involved?

Before doing a course you will need to book an appointment with the diabetes team to have some blood tests taken and for advice on how you may need to adjust your insulins in preparation for the DAFNE week.

There may also be doctors, nurses or dietitians observing courses to learn how to teach DAFNE themselves.

You will be asked to complete questionnaires before your course and at annual follow-up. These data will be entered onto a national DAFNE database by your diabetes team. This routine data is used by your diabetes team, and the national DAFNE programme, to audit the benefits of DAFNE both at a local and national level. If you have any queries regarding the DAFNE database, please contact your DAFNE team. Your data is entered in a way which makes it impossible for anyone other than your diabetes team to identify you – this is called pseudo-anonymised data.

"I've learnt such a lot in a short space of time – and I've had a bit of a laugh as well."