Monday, July 2, 2012

Research into exercise and Type 1 Diabetes

National Diabetes Week 8-14 July, 2012

Researchers from Royal Prince Alfred Hospital (RPA) and the University of Sydney have begun examining how exercise impacts people with Type 1 diabetes and whether or not an e-learning tool could help them lead safe, physically active lives.

RPA Diabetes Centre Manager, Associate Professor Marg McGill, said physical activity was a vital component of everyday life, yet there was relatively little research conducted in the area.

“We are all encouraged to be physically active however, this brings very real problems to young people with Type 1 diabetes as it can play havoc with their blood glucose levels,” Associate Professor Marg McGill, said.

“This increases the risk of low blood sugars (hypoglycaemia), which can make them feel very unwell and lead to coma if not treated.

“As a consequence, young people often lose confidence, become frustrated and stop exercising and actively taking part in sport.

“We have begun to examine any additional barriers that may exist for young people with Type 1 Diabetes to exercise and also to test an innovative web-based education tool developed by Allan Bolton, an Exercise Physiologist who has Type 1 diabetes.

“This e-learning tool has been designed to teach people with Type 1 diabetes about the specific metabolic effects of exercise and how they can better integrate exercise into daily life with confidence,” she said.

A/Prof. McGill said there was an estimated 140,000 people in Australia living with Type 1 diabetes in Australia. Most of the six new cases diagnosed each day were children under 15 years of age.

“It is particularly hard on young people to miss out on the physical and psychological benefits exercise brings,” she said.

“With this research, we hope will give them back the confidence to be physically active in a safe and secure manner.”

The Diabetes Centre is part of an elite global network of diabetes services. Last December it was recognised by the International Diabetes Federation as the first IDF Centre of Excellence in Education for health professionals in the Asia Pacific region.
The Centre was recognised for its outstanding record in providing education for health professionals around the world but, in particular, across the entire Asia Pacific Region.

This year's National Diabetes Week aims to raise awareness about the importance of stress management for people living with diabetes.

Living with a chronic condition such as diabetes, can in itself be a major cause of anxiety for many people and managing stress is particularly important.

Stress management can reduce blood glucose levels and help prevent long-term complications.

People with diabetes can de-stress by:

- recognising they’re stressed and doing something about it
- reminding themselves that they have managed through bad times before
- talking to their family and friends about how they feel
- adding some physical activity to their routine
- spending time having fun, doing things they enjoy
- monitoring their blood glucose levels