

Invited Speaker Abstract

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Title of Presentation

New technology (pumps, CGMs) and diabetes: the role of the clinical dietitian in education

1. Abstract

The last 30 years have seen many technological improvements in the availability of insulin products and the development of new devices such as insulin pump technologies, which seem to improve health outcomes in people with diabetes.

For many people with diabetes, good glycaemic control involves important and constant decision-making, as well as a continuous battle between hyperglycaemia and hypoglycaemia due to the glycaemic variability.

Technology can play an important role in helping patients with self-managing diabetes but it requires a new and flexible approach from both patients and dietitians.

Patients have to be willing to make changes in their self-care routines and have to continue to learn more about food and carbohydrates and their relationship with glycaemia. No device can substitute a balanced diet and an adequate food selection.

The food selection cannot be only focussed on maintaining adequate glycaemic levels but has also to consider the nutritional needs of the patient.

The new challenge for a dietitian is to keep up with the new technologies available as well as to keep working alongside the patient and the health care team in a way to tailor the best plan to the single individual.

Despite the various diabetes technologies available, the dietitian has to keep teaching about food portions, how to read nutrition labels and how to consider the amount and the quality of the carbohydrates taken in, so as to adjust insulin dose accordingly. For some people it may be important to learn about glycaemic index and/or the effect of proteins and fat on blood glucose levels, as well as learning how to manage all the information with or without an insulin pump.

The dietitian has to tailor a plan to the single patient, based on their willingness to learn and change without forgetting the pleasure to eat.

2. key references

- Academy of Nutrition and Dietetic Nutrition Practice Guideline for Type 1 and Type2 Diabetes in Adults: Nutrition Intervention Evidence Reviews and Recommendations.
- Alcàntara-Aragòn V. Improving patient self-care using diabetes technologies. Ther Adv Endocrinol Metab 2019;10:1–11. doi: 10.1177/2042018818824215

3. key messages