

Notes on Diabetes Thanet Zoom meeting 3rd March 2022

Brad welcomed Elizabeth LePla who attended in her role as an ambassador for the Public Health Collaboration. She agreed to tell us about the Low Carb group she created and how she got involved with it. She said she had been diagnosed with type 2 diabetes about five years ago. She had been 'eating properly' as far as she understood, but was overweight and had a high HbA1c reading of 68! She had heard that type 2 diabetes could be put into remission by changing what you eat. She decided to go for the Michael Mosely's 8-week Blood Sugar diet. She now thinks its 800 calories per day advice is too low – the real solution is to eat as few carbs as possible. She took 12 to 13 weeks to put the diabetes into remission and kept on the low carb regime, with a HbA1c reading of around 35 over the last five years and 4 stone lighter. She then joined the PHC with the intention to help other people with diabetes to get off their drugs and eat healthily. She pointed out that the NHS healthy eating advice is bad for diabetics to follow, with its emphasis on cereals and other carb heavy foods, and low-fat varieties of other foods. She said her local doctor was a fan of David Unwin and he supported her intention to set up a low carb group in the Basingstoke area. This group has gone from strength to strength and she recently enrolled the 400th member into the group. Initially the group met in person but since the pandemic it is meeting virtually via Zoom and online presentations and courses. John pointed out he had also used the blood sugar diet to put his diabetes into remission on the advice of his local surgery. Elizabeth said it was unusual for surgeries to take that position.

We moved on to Jeremy's presentation on the thyroid, entitled 'Understanding Thyroid Function'. He had taken much of his data from works by Amy Berger, Bryan Walsh and Dr Ken Berry. He told us that there are two forms of thyroid disorder, Hypothyroidism – not producing enough thyroid hormone and Hyperthyroidism – having an overactive thyroid. He described how the Hypothalamus generates TRH (Thyrotropin releasing hormone) which goes to the pituitary gland, which in turn generates TSH (Thyroid stimulating hormone) which goes to the thyroid. The thyroid produces T3 (7%) & T4 (93%). The thyroid is self regulating and passes information back to the hypothalamus and the pituitary gland. Normally the T4 converts to active Free T3 and Reverse inactive T3 in the correct proportions. The thyroid's function is to regulate the body's metabolic rate controlling heart, muscle, digestive function, brain development and bone maintenance, with Free T3 acting as the controller, like an accelerator pedal.

The signs and symptoms of a low thyroid include Weight gain (and/or inability to lose weight), Fatigue, Depression, apathy, Constipation, Cold hands and feet, Slowed heart rate and Low blood pressure.¹ The signs and symptoms of an overactive thyroid include Rapid heart rate, palpitations, Increased appetite, Sudden & unexplained weight loss, Nervousness, anxiety, irritability, Difficulty sleeping, Fatigue and muscle weakness. Jeremy pointed out that diabetes sufferers are more likely than the general population to suffer from thyroid dysfunction, with type 1 females a 31.4% incidence. Dr Ken Berry suggests that there are 7 tests which should be used to get a more complete diagnosis. 1. TSH, 2. Free T4, 3. Free T3, 4. Reverse T3, 5. TPO-Ab, 6. TG-Ab and 7. Urine-Iodine.² The discussion afterwards concentrated on what tests the NHS offer for thyroid problems, and whether it is worth getting further tests from private sources. Alicia mentioned that GPs are often wary of patients doing their own research. Elizabeth pointed out that GPs are often slow to hit on the correct doses to control thyroid problems. She said she used a private company called Thriva but there are many other companies offering the service.³ Alicia said Superdrug also offers these tests.

¹ Amy Berger <http://www.tuitnutrition.com/2017/10/thyroid-intro.html>

² Dr Ken Berry https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d_k1GjM_Xb0

³ <https://thriva.co/>

Notes on Diabetes Thanet Zoom meeting 3rd March 2022

Brian then told us about the prescription drugs he is taking, and he also mentioned the problems he had with his diabetic nurse who took him off his gliceride which disturbed his blood sugar levels for five months. Elizabeth offered a defence of the nurse who she thought was doing her job and was trying to prevent Brian getting a hypo.

Brad then recommended Aloe Vera and Coriander as blood pressure reducers. Brian then introduced the Diabetes Conference we hope to run on 14th November, World Diabetes Day and wondered if the group was interested. Jeremy thought it was a good idea. Brian thought Elizabeth would be very useful in getting contacts for the conference. Alicia thought the conference should be on the leaflets we are handing out.

Attendees were Brad, John, Jeremy, Alicia, Brian, Anne, Elizabeth and Maxine. Next meeting is at 5pm on April 7th 2022.