

Screen Test Testing for Type 2 Diabetes

This is a discussion between our own **Dr Phil Evans** and another diabetes expert (**Dr Simon Griffin**).



In the light of the new NHS Checks for heart disease and diabetes, the question is whether a screening programme could work by having people who are at risk of diabetes tested even if they show no symptoms.

Phil Evans argues that it is relatively easy to find who should be tested and that a simple blood test is available. He suggests that everybody between 40 and 70 who has a family history of diabetes, weight problems or an unhealthy lifestyle should be offered a test.

Simon Griffin wonders if such a test is worth the money or is effective in finding the people with diabetes.

Phil Evans' response is that we should not be waiting for people to become ill and then offer them the test. He also thinks the test would give value for money.

Simon Griffin comes back with more doubts about cost and a concern that if the test is not good at picking up diabetes, this could have an impact on the person and doctors may also be blamed.



Overall, the balance of the argument would seem to lie with Dr Evans in that such screening must be worth a try, given the likely dangers that people in middle age and beyond face.

For full text see: Diabetes Update Winter 2009
Summary prepared by Geoff Barr (Patient Representative)