

Free annual check and "Warrant of Fitness"

All people in New Zealand with diabetes are entitled to a free diabetes check with their GP or GP practice nurse once a year. Your GP may put you on a recall system to remind you when your check is due. You may also decide to have your check in the month of your birthday each year. This is often a good way of remembering to have your check.

What's the purpose of the yearly check-up?

The free check serves several purposes. Firstly it acts as a reminder to both yourself and your GP that nothing important has been missed out of your diabetes care for the year.

Details of the check

As part of your check-up, you and your GP or practice nurse need to completely fill out a special form. To complete the form you need to have had all the following checks or tests either done or booked to be done:

- A diabetes eye check (check of your retinas) within the last two years
- Your blood pressure checked
- An HBA1c level done (this checks your average blood glucose levels over the previous 6 weeks)
- Your cholesterol levels checked
- Your height and weight checked
- Your kidney function checked
- Many doctors and nurses will also check the sensation and circulation of your feet at this check

Another important function of the free annual check is to collect nation-wide information about the numbers of people with diabetes and the state of their health.

The information is collected from the completed annual check forms in a way that means you cannot be identified (in other words, your privacy is protected). The data from all the forms is then collated into national statistics. These statistics are then available to health planners and groups keen to lobby for better services in diabetes care.

Your "Warrant of Fitness"

As well as having a free annual check you may wish to keep your own record of your checks (and the results of these checks). This record is often called a "Warrant of Fitness" (WOF).

A sample of a typical 'Warrant of Fitness' card with goal levels for values follows:

Date				
Weight				
Blood Pressure (goal < 135/75)				
HBA1c (goal < 7%)				
Total Cholesterol (goal < 5.2)				
HDL Cholesterol (goal > 1.1)				
LDL Cholesterol (goal < 2.5)				
Triglycerides (goal < 2.0)				
Microalbuminuria (ratio < 3)				
Date of last eye examination (at least every 2 years)				
Foot check, sensation and pulses				

If you are using a record like this, take it to each diabetes-related appointment

you have. It can be very useful to you and your medical team. This is because the WOF allows:

- Each item on the WOF to be checked-off during your annual check
- A record of the various parts of your diabetes management that you can keep for your own reference
- You and/or your health advisor to pick up on potential trouble spots - which you can then address

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