

associated with muscle weakness in the hip flexors or extensors (diabetic amyotrophy). Fortunately, diabetic polyradiculopathies are usually self-limited and resolve over 6–12 months.

TREATMENT

Diabetic Neuropathy

Prevention of diabetic neuropathy is critical through improved glycemic control. Treatment of diabetic neuropathy is less than satisfactory. Lifestyle modifications (exercise, diet) have some efficacy in DSPN in type 2 DM and hypertension, and hypertriglyceridemia should be treated. Efforts to improve glycemic control in long-standing diabetes may be confounded by hypoglycemia unawareness. Patients should avoid neurotoxins (including alcohol) and smoking, and consider supplementation with vitamins for possible deficiencies (B₁₂, folate; [Chap. 333](#)).

Metformin may reduce intestinal absorption of vitamin B₁₂ in type 2 DM, and pernicious anemia is more common in type 1 DM where it is associated with anti-parietal cell autoantibodies and may require sublingual or parenteral B₁₂ replacement. Patients should be educated that loss of sensation in the foot increases the risk for ulceration and its sequelae and that prevention of such problems is paramount. Patients with symptoms or signs of neuropathy or LOPS should check their feet daily and take precautions (footwear) aimed at preventing calluses or ulcerations. If foot deformities are present, a podiatrist should be involved.

Chronic, painful diabetic neuropathy is difficult to treat with only symptomatic treatment being available; evidence of the effectiveness of improved glycemic control in painful diabetic neuropathy is lacking. Two oral agents approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), duloxetine and pregabalin, or gabapentin is usually initially used for pain associated with diabetic neuropathy. Diabetic neuropathy may respond to tricyclic antidepressants, venlafaxine, carbamazepine, tramadol, or topical capsaicin products. An 8% capsaicin patch requires application by a health care provider. Tapentadol, a centrally acting opioid, is also