

Your **Mental Health** and Diabetes

Having type 2 diabetes can be stressful. But with the right approach to treatment, you can live a long and healthy life. Reaching your diabetes goals early and learning how to manage diabetes over time can prevent or delay the long-term complications associated with diabetes.

Your diabetes journey requires being in touch with your emotions and taking charge of your physical and mental health. Having diabetes can seem overwhelming, but these tips can help you to manage it.

Support Is Key to Success

- Have others who can be there for you on your diabetes journey.
- Build a health care team you trust. They can provide the information, guidance, and support you need to manage diabetes.
- Talk to your health care team about anything that is getting in the way of your treatment plan. If you experience challenges such as transportation to appointments, paying for your medications, food, or house, let your team know—they can assist you and refer you to community resources.
- Share with friends and family how they can help and support you.
- Schedule fun things to do with people you like in your life.

**Build a
health care
team
you trust.**



Ask questions and get answers.



Knowledge Is Power

- Learn as much as you can about how to manage diabetes, ensuring that you are using resources endorsed by your health care team.
- Take part in diabetes self-management education and support (DSMES) services. After all, most of your diabetes care is in your hands.
- Talk to your health care providers on a regular basis and be honest so they can accurately troubleshoot with you.
- Ask questions and make sure you get answers you understand.

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Defeat Denial

- Set realistic goals that will motivate you for things like blood glucose (blood sugar) numbers. Make sure you know if you're reaching your targets for this and other health goals like blood pressure.
- Use technology, such as a continuous glucose monitor (CGM), to track your daily blood glucose levels. Keep in mind that the readings give you and your health care team information to be used in adjusting your treatment plan as needed. Blood glucose levels are not “good” or “bad.”
- Lab tests are more than just numbers. Find out what your lab results mean for you as well as your treatment plan.



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Give Up the Guilt

- Being overweight and not being active can contribute to development of type 2 diabetes, but there are also other factors, such as genetics, that are out of your control.
- Eating more than you planned or not being able to exercise can happen to anyone. You don't have to be perfect on your diabetes journey.
- Diabetes progresses over time and your body may require more assistance to manage blood glucose levels. Needing to take more medications, including insulin, to manage diabetes doesn't mean you failed. The important thing is to take your medications as prescribed.

Depression and Distress

- People with diabetes are more likely to have depression, anxiety, and other mental health issues.
- Steps to manage diabetes, like sticking to a schedule, can add to feelings of stress.
- Be aware of signs of depression. This can include feeling hopeless about your life, feeling worthless, and in some cases, even thoughts of suicide. Talk to someone on your health care team or call 988 for help if you have these feelings.

If you don't feel like yourself, talk with your health care team about what's bothering you, there are options! Your health care professional can refer you for support.

Counseling can often reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety and offer healthy coping skills. Our mental health directory diabetes.org/MentalHealth can help you find a provider.

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