

Ways to Help You Manage Your Diabetes

Many things can stand in the way of taking good care of yourself when you have diabetes. Luckily, there are solutions to help you rise above the problems.

PROBLEMS	SOLUTIONS
You can't understand your health care provider.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tell him or her you don't understand the information he or she is giving you.• Ask if he or she can recommend a self-management education program to help you.
Your health care provider doesn't speak your language.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Look for a community-based diabetes education program. It is taught by people who speak the language of your community.
Your drugs cost too much.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To find and enroll in programs that help pay for prescription drugs, go to www.benefitscheckup.org.
You have other health problems besides diabetes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask your health care provider about medical nutrition therapy (MNT). It helps you manage your diabetes and any other health conditions you have.
You're angry about your diabetes, which makes it hard to care for yourself.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask your health care provider to recommend a support group in your area.
You can't see well.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Get an annual dilated eye exam.• Use a magnifying glass to help measure your drugs and/or read your test results.
You can't hear well.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make sure you get all instructions in writing.• If necessary, wear a hearing aid to all appointments.• Take a friend or relative to all appointments.
The health care system is hard to use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask your health care provider to recommend a self-management education program.

Overcoming Barriers

Take a Diabetes Education Class

To manage your diabetes, you need to understand the behaviors you can control that affect your diabetes. Diabetes education classes are taught by a certified diabetes educator (CDE) who is trained to help you build good habits and set goals. Here's how a CDE can help you:

Eat Healthy

A CDE can teach you how food affects your blood sugar level, help you plan meals, and show you how to make healthy food choices. You'll learn how to read labels, plan and prepare meals, measure foods for portion control, and count fat and carbohydrates.

Exercise

If you have physical disabilities, don't like to exercise, or can't find the time, a CDE can work with you. Your CDE can help you create an exercise plan that balances your diet and medicines with your activity level.

Monitor Your Blood Sugar

A diabetes education class can show you how to use blood sugar monitoring devices and will discuss when and how to do the tests, what goals to aim for, and how to read and use your results.

Take Your Medicines

Your CDE can help you learn about the medicines you are taking—how they work, side effects, your dosage, appropriate timing, what happens if you miss a dose, how to store your drugs, and other vital information.

Reduce Your Risks

You can learn how to quit smoking, take care of your feet, monitor your blood pressure, and keep up-to-date health records.

Cope With Your Fears

Sometimes you just need to talk through your concerns and fears about your diabetes. A CDE can help you learn what you can control and give you ways to cope with those factors that you can't.

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