

March is Diabetes Awareness Month

Diabetes can affect you physically and emotionally. Living with it every day can make you feel discouraged, stressed or even depressed. It is natural to have mixed feelings about your diabetes management and experience highs and lows. The important thing is to recognize these emotions as normal. Take steps to reduce the negative impact they could have on your self-care.

The way you deal with your emotional lows is called “coping.” There are lots of ways to cope with the upsets in your life—and not all of them are good for your health (smoking, overeating, not finding time for activity, or avoiding people and social situations).

However, there are healthy coping methods that you can use to get you through tough times (faith-based activities, exercise, meditation, enjoyable hobbies, joining a support group).

Having a support network is key to healthy coping. Be sure to develop and nurture partnerships in your personal life with your spouse, loved ones and friends. Go to group educational sessions where you can meet and relate to other people going through the same experiences. Build healthy relationships—and remember that you’re not alone.

Sometimes, emotional lows can be lengthy and have a serious impact on your life health, and relationships. This can be a sign of depression. Tell your diabetes educator if you:

- » Don’t have interest in or find pleasure in your activities.
- » Avoid discussing your diabetes with family and friends.
- » Sleep most of the day.
- » Don’t see the benefit in taking care of yourself.
- » Feel like diabetes is conquering you.
- » Feel like you can’t take care of yourself.



American Association
of Diabetes Educators

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Physical activity can influence your mood. If you are sad, anxious, stressed or upset, go for a walk, stand up and stretch, or take a bicycle ride. Exercise actually increases the chemicals in your brain that help make you feel good!

TRUE OR FALSE?

Nobody wants to hear about your problems. When you are feeling down, you should keep it to yourself.

FALSE. You need to talk about your emotions with friends, family, or your healthcare provider. Sometimes just talking about a problem will help you solve it, and loved ones can help you gain perspective.



QUICK TIPS

Recognize the power of positive thinking. When you are feeling down, think about your successes and feel good about the progress you’ve made toward a goal—even if it’s just a little bit.

Find time to do something pleasurable every day.

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