

My emotions and diabetes

Information Prescription

Living with diabetes has its ups and downs and it can affect how you feel. It is common to sometimes feel scared, stressed, angry or low in your mood. Understanding how diabetes affects your mood means you can take steps to improve your emotional wellbeing. This may also help you manage your diabetes well.

How am I feeling?

When you have diabetes, it is normal to feel:

- insecure, angry or overwhelmed about having diabetes
- stressed with constantly managing your diabetes
- burnout – feeling 'done' with diabetes
- worried about your blood glucose (sugar) levels.

There are certain times in your life with diabetes when you may be more likely to experience these feelings.

For example:

- around the time of diagnosis and until you understand diabetes
- during a significant life event, such as bereavement, losing a job or getting divorced
- if you experience a complication related to your diabetes.



What signs should I look out for?

Everyone feels upset or stressed from time to time. But look out for the following signs:

- feeling frustrated about the demands of managing diabetes
- feeling as though diabetes is controlling your life
- avoiding parts of your diabetes routine
- difficulty adjusting to life with diabetes
- feeling alone and isolated.

If you notice one or more of these things is happening regularly and it is bothering you or causing you distress, it could be a sign that you are finding it hard to cope with your diabetes.

Small steps to feeling better

- ☐ Find someone you feel comfortable talking to.
- ☐ Get support from other people living with diabetes by joining a local support group or call the NDSS Helpline on **1800 637 700** to find out what is available.
- ☐ Think about the things you enjoy doing and plan a definite time to do them.
- ☐ Be kind to yourself – focus on the good things in your life and do not beat yourself up about the things that are not so good.
- ☐ Take time out for rest and relaxation.
- ☐ If you feel able to, take steps to eat a healthy diet and get more active.
- ☐ Set yourself simple, achievable goals and reward yourself when you reach them.

What if I need more support?

Sometimes people with diabetes develop emotional problems such as diabetes distress, diabetes burnout, depression or anxiety. That is why it is so important you recognise the signs and can access the right kind of support when you need it most. Speak to your GP or diabetes educator. You may benefit from seeing a psychologist or counsellor. You may need medication. Keep in regular contact with your health care team until you are starting to feel better.

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My next steps

Discuss with your diabetes health care team two actions you are going to focus on (think about what, where, when and how):

- 1 _____
- 2 _____

Name: _____ Health professional: _____ Review date: _____

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