

Healthy Coping

Diabetes can affect you both physically and emotionally. Living with it every day can make you feel discouraged, stressed or even depressed. It is normal 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 diabetes 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 like 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 like **church or faith-based activities, exercise, meditation, hobbies you enjoy**, or joining a **support group**.

Having **a support network is key** to healthy coping.

- Be sure to find and nurture people in your personal life with your spouse, loved ones or 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 are not alone**.

Sometimes, emotional lows can be lengthy and have a more serious impact on your life, health, and relationships. This can be **a sign of depression**. Tell your diabetes educator or doctor if you have lost interest or do not 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

Did You Know?

Physical activity can improve 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!

Are these statements 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 and friends can maybe help you gain a better 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.

Always remember that we are here to help!



HEALTHY COPING

<i>Name 3 emotions that you feel when you think about your diabetes.</i>			
<i>Who can you talk to when you feel this way?</i>			
<i>Name 3 activities that will help you work through this emotion and feel better.</i>			

What might prevent you from doing these activities?

How can you overcome these obstacles?
