



Riverside Community Diabetes Collaborative

How You Can Help Your Loved One with Diabetes

Diabetes is tough. When you have diabetes, you need to eat health food, stay active, control your weight, take your medicine, and check your blood glucose (sugar) to see how you are doing. And that's on top of handling all the other things in life! No wonder a person with diabetes can feel stressed out and afraid.

Good diabetes care also means controlling the **ABCs of diabetes** to avoid having a heart attack, a stroke, or other diabetes problems. **A is for the A1C test** that measures blood glucose control, **B is for blood pressure**, and **C is for cholesterol**.

You want the best for your loved ones with diabetes – whether they are family members or friends. Maybe you are looking for ways to ease the pressure your mother feels. Or maybe you would like to help your husband take better control of his diabetes. It's a hard disease to handle alone. You can make a big difference in how well your loved one copes with diabetes.

Use these tips to get started today.

Tip 1

Learn about diabetes.

There is a lot to learn about living well with diabetes. Treatment is changing and we are learning more every day. You can use what you learn to help your loved one.

- Attend a class.
- Look on the internet.
- Ask the doctor or nurse how you can learn more.

Tip 2

Understand your loved one's diabetes.

Each person's experience with diabetes is different. What things are hard for your friend to manage? What things are easy?

Tip 3

Find out what your loved one needs.

Try asking these three questions.

- What do I do that helps you with your diabetes?
- What do I do that makes it harder for you to manage your diabetes?
- What can I do to help you more than I do now?

Tip 4**Talk about your feelings.**

Diabetes affects you, too. Telling your loved one how you feel can help both of you.

Tip 5**Offer practical help.**

Instead of nagging, find ways to be helpful. Ask what would help your loved one most.

- Offer to go to the doctor with your father or mother.
- Take a walk with your wife.
- Cook a tasty and healthy meal for a friend.

Tip 6**Try a new approach.**

When things aren't going right, try something new. Find one thing that works and build from there.

Tip 7**Get help.**

Many people can help you help your loved one with diabetes.

- Find a diabetes support group in the health section of your newspaper or on the internet.
- Ask your health care provider about ways to get help if your loved one is sad or depressed.
- See the resource list for groups to contact.

Where to go for help.

- **American Association of Diabetes Educators**

1-800-338-3633 or www.diabeteseducator.org

Find the name of an educator and resources in your community to help you learn about diabetes.

- **American Diabetes Association**

1-800-DIABETES or www.diabetes.org

Ask for information about diabetes care.

- **American Dietetic Association**

1-800-877-1600 or www.eatright.org

Find a dietitian to help you and your loved ones eat healthy foods.

- **Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation International**
1-800-JDF-CURE or www.jdrf.org
Find out about type 1 diabetes.
- **National Diabetes Education Program**
1-800-438-5383 or www.ndep.nih.gov
Call or visit the website for information about diabetes prevention and control.
- **National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases**
National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse
1-800-860-8747 or www.diabetes.niddk.nih.gov
Find out more about diabetes self-care.
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**
Division of Diabetes Translation
1-877-232-3422 or www.cdc.gov/diabetes
Click on “State-based Programs” for information on government contacts in your state.