

# Diabetes burnout is real

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Dealing with diabetes shouldn't leave you lifeless.



Living with diabetes can be overwhelming, stressful, and a constant challenge. This state of emotional and physical exhaustion that can come from managing this chronic condition is referred to as diabetes burnout. Unfortunately, this form of distress is a reality for many people with diabetes, leading to mental health issues and poorer diabetes outcomes. In this article, we'll explore the impact of diabetes on mental health, recognise the symptoms of diabetes burnout, and provide 10 essential tips for coping with this condition.

## How does diabetes affect mental health?

Managing diabetes is a daily task that can affect a person's mental health and emotional well-being. The constant need to monitor blood sugar levels, maintain a healthy diet, manage medications, and stay physically active can be stressful. The fear of complications and the uncertainty of diabetes can lead to anxiety, depression, frustration, and overall stress, leaving a person powerless and lifeless.

## Diabetes burnout symptoms

Recognising the symptoms of diabetes burnout is essential for managing the condition effectively. Some common signs of diabetes burnout include:

1. Lack of motivation: Feeling apathetic about managing your diabetes, neglecting self-care routines, and skipping doctor's appointments.
2. Irritability: Becoming easily frustrated, short-tempered, or experiencing mood swings related to diabetes management.
3. Constant fatigue: Feeling mentally and physically exhausted due to the relentless demands of diabetes self-care.
4. Increased blood sugar levels: Neglecting dietary and medication regimens may result in uncontrolled blood sugar levels.
5. Social isolation: Withdrawing from social activities and support networks due to the emotional burden of diabetes.

6. Neglecting blood sugar monitoring: Avoid regular blood sugar testing and disregarding the importance of consistent self-monitoring.

## **10 tips for coping with diabetes burnout**

Managing diabetes burnout is crucial for maintaining physical and mental well-being. Here are ten practical tips to help cope with this challenging condition:

1. Set realistic goals: To avoid feeling overwhelmed, it is helpful to break down diabetes management into smaller, achievable goals. Setting achievable goals can provide a sense of control over your diabetes management.
2. Reach out for support: Don't hesitate to lean on friends, family, or diabetes support groups for emotional support and understanding.
3. Practice self-compassion: Forgive yourself for occasional lapses and remember that managing diabetes is an ongoing process. Prioritise self-care activities that make you feel good about yourself.
4. Seek professional help: Consult a mental health professional or therapist if feelings of burnout persist. Regular check-ups can help keep track of your diabetes and provide reassurance.
5. Create a routine: Establish a structured daily routine for diabetes management to reduce decision fatigue. Incorporating technology into your daily routine can make establishing healthy habits more effortless and enjoyable. Consider using apps for cooking, exercise, meditation, or other self-care practices to add excitement to your daily life.
6. Diversify your diet: A healthy diet can help maintain stable blood sugar levels, reducing stress related to glucose management. Explore new healthy food options to prevent dietary monotony and sustain motivation.
7. Stay active: Regular physical activity can help reduce stress and improve mood.
8. Mindfulness and meditation: Taking short breaks during the day for relaxation or meditation is essential. Practicing these techniques can reduce stress and anxiety and increase feelings of well-being.
9. Celebrate small wins: Acknowledge and celebrate your achievements in managing your diabetes.
10. Take a break: Permit yourself to take occasional breaks from diabetes-related responsibilities. Consult with your healthcare team regarding how to take a few days off to replenish your energy levels. This could involve refraining from your usual exercise routine and reducing the frequency of checking your blood glucose levels for a day or two.

## **How to help a loved one with diabetes**

Supporting a loved one with diabetes involves understanding their condition and the stress it can cause. Encourage open communication and attend medical appointments together. Be there when they need to talk about their feelings and frustrations. Please encourage them to take breaks, eat healthily, and stay active. Be a source of motivation and positivity. If they show signs of burnout, encourage them to seek professional help.

Coping with diabetes burnout is a journey, but there is hope. Seeking the assistance of a mental health professional, either in-person or online, can be a vital step toward better emotional well-being. Remember that you're not alone in this struggle,

Living with diabetes is challenging, but remember you're not alone. Accept that it's okay to feel overwhelmed sometimes. It's part of the process and doesn't define your ability to manage your diabetes. With the right strategies and support, you can regain control of your life and find balance while managing diabetes. If you're experiencing signs of diabetes burnout, don't hesitate to seek help from a mental health professional or general practitioner with a special interest in mental health, in-

person or online. It's okay to ask for help when you need it. Remember, dealing with diabetes shouldn't leave you lifeless.

Sources and references consulted:

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