



EPIC
DIABETES
CONFERENCE

MARCH 4, 2017 | DENVER MARRIOTT CITY CENTER

EMPOWERING PATIENTS
FOR
INDIVIDUALIZED CARE



Barbara Davis Center for Diabetes
Children's Diabetes Foundation

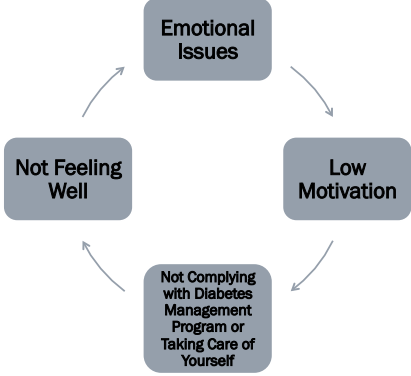
Does Diabetes Affect Your Emotions?

Do your Emotions Affect your Diabetes?

YES!!!






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    graph TD
      A[Emotional Issues] --> B[Low Motivation]
      B --> C[Not Complying with Diabetes Management Program or Taking Care of Yourself]
      C --> D[Not Feeling Well]
      D --> A
  
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Common Emotional Issues That Present With Diabetes:



Depression
Can lead to feeling apathetic, unmotivated or in denial in regards to diabetes.

Guilt:
An inner conflict about hurting ourselves or others (not checking blood sugars, feeling guilty that family members are withholding sugary or carb laden foods from their diets to avoid hurting you, anger outbursts at family members during low blood sugars).

Shame:
A feeling of humiliation/distress caused by consciousness of guilt (eating foods that will raise blood sugars, high A1c levels, gaining weight, feeling like you are letting your doctor/family down).

Anger:
Often related to a violation of personal values (feeling angry that you have to live with diabetes all day, every day and others don't, others being insensitive to your diabetes).

Anxiety:
Often a reaction to possible future events (fear of hypoglycemia and thus allowing glucose to be high OR fear of complications).

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GLUCOSE is directly impacted by stress (emotional and physical) :

- **HORMONES:** epinephrine (adrenaline), glucagon, growth hormone, and cortisol
- **GLUCOSE PRODUCTION RISES:** more glucose is released from the liver (glucagon, adrenaline)
- **INSULIN RESISTANCE RISES:** the body becomes less sensitive to insulin (growth hormone, cortisol)

EMOTIONS can also be impacted by glucose levels:

- **LOW GLUCOSE :** can lead to irritability, confusion, defiance/belligerence
- **HIGH GLUCOSE :** can lead to fatigue, blurry vision, going to the bathroom more often, crankiness



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So, if our stress levels are compounded day after day just by living with diabetes and then emotional stress is thrown into the mix, it becomes important that we as diabetics, learn to **COPE** with our stress levels and eliminate any further negative impact on our physical and mental health...

COPING SKILLS:

- **Address** your sense of worry and guilt by making **clear treatment goals** and **asking for support** (discussing your emotions should be part of every single doctor's appointment).
- **Educate** your family and friends about your diabetes, **define** how you want family/friends to help (coach family members to have realistic expectations about blood sugars and avoid blame), **ask them directly for the help** and **teach them how to give it**.
- **Counseling and education** can improve the relationship between diabetes and life. If diabetics, their families and friends all **know what to expect**, difficult days and blood sugar related mood swings can be **managed successfully**.



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COPING SKILLS (con):

- Stay motivated, **NOT PERFECT!**
- **Identify barriers** to good diabetes care (what keeps you from exercising? Is there another form of exercise you can do aside from going to the gym?)
- **Relaxation skills** to manage anxiety and other emotions (breathing exercises, physical activity, replacing harmful thoughts with good ones, making changes to avoid stressful situations, mindfulness)
- Develop a **healthy-habits action plan**.
- **DIABETES MUST FIT INTO YOUR LIFE, YOU CAN'T REVOLVE YOUR LIFE AROUND IT!**



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