

# Healthy Coping

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Managing your emotional health is just as important as managing your physical health. There are many feelings you may experience when you are diagnosed with diabetes. You may also have these feelings if you have been living with diabetes for a long time. Feeling sadness, fear, anger or anxiety are normal. It is important to find healthy ways to cope with them.

## Stages of Adjustment

People move through stages of adjustment when facing a change in their daily lives. A person with diabetes may experience any of these stages at any time.

<b>Denial</b>	<b>Anger</b>	<b>Bargaining</b>	<b>Depression</b>	<b>Acceptance</b>
<i>This cannot be happening to me.</i>	<i>Why is this happening? Who is to blame?</i>	<i>I will _____ to make this all go away.</i>	<i>I cannot do this. I do not want to do this.</i>	<i>I am okay. I am ready to take care of myself.</i>

## Diabetes Distress and Burnout

**Diabetes distress** can happen when you are worried, stressed, sad, fearful or angry about having and dealing with diabetes. In **diabetes burnout** a person grows tired of managing their disease and begins to ignore it. Clues that you might be dealing with these conditions include feelings of frustration, worry, anxiety and a lack of desire to manage your diabetes.

Treatment for diabetes distress and burnout includes goal setting, counseling, family support, regular exercise or switching up your routine. Do not expect to be perfect. Even small efforts are good.

## Depression

Clinical depression is a serious medical condition that affects thoughts, feelings and the ability to function in everyday life. It may feel like a sense of hopelessness and helplessness in life.

Depression is more common in people living with diabetes. If you think you are depressed, talk to your provider.

## Stress

Your body reacts to stress by sending out hormones. These hormones may increase your blood sugar. It is helpful to know what may cause you stress. You cannot eliminate stress entirely. If you know what triggers stress and how to cope with it, you may be better able to manage your diabetes.

## Coping with Stress

- **Identify the cause.** Try to pinpoint what is causing your stress.
- **Decrease your stressors.** Is it possible to change any of your stressors? Focus on the things that are the most important. Ask for help if needed.
- **Do one thing at a time.**
- **Take time to do things you enjoy.** Make time for fun and relaxation. Even a small amount of time doing the things that you enjoy is helpful.
  - Hobbies
  - Meditation or deep breathing
  - Journaling
  - Reading
  - Laughing
  - Taking a bath
  - Listening to music
  - Spend time with friends or family
  - Get some fresh air
  - Do a puzzle
  - Gardening
  - Work on fix it projects
- **Move your body.** Physical activity is good for your emotional health too!
  - Dancing
  - Yoga
  - Hiking
  - Bike riding
  - Walking
  - Running
- **Get support.** Use your family, friends, your healthcare team, support groups, neighbors, or co-workers as support. Talking to other people with diabetes may be helpful.
- **Be kind to yourself.**
- **Celebrate your success.**