

Diabetes and Depression

If you have diabetes, you know that it can be a challenging condition that requires attention and care. What you might not realize is that it can sometimes cause you to feel depressed. It is important for you to catch that depression before it becomes too severe, as it can in turn lead to [aggravating your diabetes](#). And for people who don't have diabetes, depression has been known to cause it.

The textbook definition of [depression](#) is a prolonged period of sadness (of two weeks or more) with no known cause. If you have depression, you might feel that you've lost interest in the fun activities that you once enjoyed, such as playing with your kids, and feel generally hopeless.

But depression can be risky for people with diabetes because it can distract from the constant vigilance that their condition often requires. However, it is important to know that if you feel depressed, there are steps you can take to get the help you need.

Link between Diabetes and Depression

A study conducted by the National Institute of Health (NIH) has shown that people with depression have a [37%](#) chance of developing Type 2 diabetes. This may be due to people with depression being more likely to do unhealthy things such as smoking, overeating, and not exercising. Depression can also affect how glucose is broken down in the body, leading to an increase in [insulin resistance](#), thus increasing the risk for Type 2 diabetes.

If someone with diabetes has complications, meanwhile, it's more likely that they will experience recurring bouts of depression, which can occur with both Type 1 and Type 2. People with diabetes and depression were also more likely to report [symptoms](#), such as thirst, frequent urination, and blurred vision, even after the severity of their diabetes is controlled.

The link between diabetes and depression can therefore be a vicious cycle, in which someone neglects their self-care, aggravating the condition, which in turn aggravates the depression.

What to Do?

The first and most important step for you to do is to see a primary healthcare provider, who might refer you to a mental health provider, who can help with psychotherapy and medications if needed.

[Health coaching](#) has also had good success and can help you better manage your diabetes. It can help you by increasing your physical activity (which boosts levels of mood-improving endorphins) and be more attentive about blood-glucose levels. It can also help you stick with a healthier diet (low in carbohydrates, caffeine and fattening food in general). All of these can significantly improve both conditions, cutting off the vicious diabetes-depression cycle.