

## Diabetes and Depression

With Diabetes often comes another potentially debilitating disease: depression. Depression affects 3-5% of the general population, but 15-20% of those with Diabetes. Therefore, it is important to have a good understanding of depression, and how to address it as part of a comprehensive Diabetes management program.

### Causes of Depression in Diabetes

It isn't clear why diabetics have a higher rate of depression, but there are some theories. It is possible that:

- The stress of managing Diabetes becomes overwhelming, thus contributing to depression.
- Depression may come from the effects of Diabetes on the brain.
- Diabetes can cause health problems that worsen depression.
- Medical complications can result in feeling out of control, which can contribute to depression.



### Diabetes and Depression Can be a Dangerous Combination

Depression can block Diabetes self-care, such as exercise, diet, and blood sugar testing. Those with Type 2 Diabetes and major depression are more likely to experience life-threatening complications from Diabetes. This includes microvascular complications, such as blindness, end-stage kidney disease, amputations and kidney failure, and macrovascular complications, such as heart attack, stroke, and cardiovascular problems.

### Know the Symptoms of Depression

The most common signs of depression are:

- A loss of pleasure in daily activities
- Feeling worthless and hopeless
- Excessive crying and feeling empty
- Loss of energy and enthusiasm for life
- Sleeping excessively or disturbed sleep
- A severe change in appetite
- Thoughts of suicide or self-harm



### If You Are Diabetic and Experience Depression

There are important steps you can take to help treat the depression that accompanies Diabetes:

- Continue your Diabetes self-management program.
- Discuss symptoms and potential solutions with your doctor, which may include medication.
- Consider seeking counseling.
- Be aware that the lifestyle changes that help with Diabetes also help alleviate symptoms of depression.

There is hope - with recognition and the proper help, a person experiencing Diabetes and depression can again lead a fulfilling and happy life.