



LIVING A BALANCED LIFE WITH DIABETES:

Tips for Taking Care of Yourself

National Diabetes Education Program



DEALING WITH DIABETES

Diabetes is very common in American Indians and Alaska Natives. If you have diabetes, you know that the day-to-day steps needed to manage this illness can be hard. It can sometimes seem like too much to handle.

Most of the time, having diabetes is not a problem, you just deal with it. But, sometimes, it can be tough and you may not always feel good about yourself.

These feelings are normal. A lot of people feel down sometimes. But, there are things that you can do to feel better:

- **Get help from others.** Talk with the elders and seek out their wisdom. Share your feelings with a good friend or family member.
- **Get support for other issues in your life.** For many people, diabetes is only one of the things that causes worry or stress. Along with dealing with diabetes, you may also have concerns about work, family, or other relationships. Get support for things that bother you. When you are stressed, it will often be harder to control your diabetes.
- **Be physically active.** Play hard. Shoot hoops, ride a bike, dance, or take a brisk walk. Being active can help you relax, lower stress, and improve how you feel about yourself.
- **Learn something new.** Read about your tribe's past and share what you have learned with others.
- **Eat healthy foods.** Good eating habits—such as eating fruits and vegetables, whole grain breads, low-fat meats or other proteins, milk, and cheese—can help you take care of yourself.
- **Take time to do things you enjoy.** Staying busy can help you focus on upbeat things. Find out about fun activities that you can do with a friend.
- **Do something nice for someone else.** Helping someone in need can make you feel better. Help out in your community.
- **Make a list of your strengths and accomplishments.** Jot down the things you do well, your successes, and things that make you feel good about yourself.
- **Keep a journal.** Writing down your thoughts can help you work through some issues and it can help you see how you solved a similar problem in the past.

SOMETIMES HAVING DIABETES CAN BE TOUGH! TALKING ABOUT YOUR FEELINGS WITH THE ELDERS, BEING PHYSICALLY ACTIVE, AND LEARNING SOMETHING NEW ARE A FEW STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO FEEL BETTER.



GETTING HELP

If you find that you feel down for most days, talk to your health care team (doctor, nurse, diabetes educator, dietitian, psychologist, or social worker), your spiritual counselor, or some other person you trust. They can help you get the support you need.

If you have been thinking about hurting or killing yourself, get help. Tell someone. You can get support from the National Suicide Prevention Hotline at **1-800-273-8255**, or visit **www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org**.

LEARN MORE ABOUT DIABETES:

National Diabetes Education Program

www.YourDiabetesInfo.org

1-888-693-NDEP (6337)

National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse

www.diabetes.niddk.nih.gov

1-800-860-8747

LEARN MORE ABOUT SELF-ESTEEM AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH:

National Diabetes Education Program Diabetes HealthSense

www.YourDiabetesInfo.org/resources/diabetes-healthsense

American Psychological Association

www.apa.org/helpcenter/exercise.aspx

1-800-374-2721

Mental Health America

www.mentalhealthamerica.net/go/mental-health-month/managing-lifes-challenges

1-800-969-6642

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www.YourDiabetesInfo.org or 1-888-693-NDEP (6337), TTY: 1-866-569-1162