

Diabetes & You

Be The Boss Of Your Diabetes: Three Self-Management Tips

(NAPSA)—Diabetes is one of the fastest-growing conditions in the U.S. Today, the number of Americans diagnosed with diabetes has skyrocketed to nearly one in 10, compared to one in 100 just 50 years ago. Chances are that you or someone you know is coping with it.

What You Can Do

Hearing from your doctor that you have diabetes can be an overwhelming experience. From that day forward, your “new normal” may involve some lifestyle changes. Managing diabetes is a 24/7 responsibility, and many people don’t know where to turn for help to get started. The good news is that diabetes self-management education classes and resources are widely available. Diabetes education can help you to navigate changes and learn simple ways to improve your overall health.

Diabetes self-management means a number of key behavioral changes, including tweaks to diet and exercise, and learning to manage your medication. And while you can attempt those tweaks by yourself, you don’t need to go it alone. Most insurance plans, Medicaid and Medicare cover diabetes self-management education. Unfortunately, studies show only 6 percent of people take advantage of diabetes classes meant to help them manage their diabetes within the first year of being diagnosed.

You can get a better handle on self-management for your “new norm” with these three tips:

- **Attend a diabetes education class.** Most health care providers offer classes to help people with diabetes learn how to manage their condition. You’ll learn best practices and tips for meal planning, monitoring blood sugar, medications, stress management and more. In addition, many community organizations offer classes to support continued learning and management of diabetes.

- **Discover healthy lifestyle ideas.** As diabetes becomes increasingly prevalent, more organizations are offering a variety of classes to help support healthy living. These classes can include healthy



Doctors agree: Learning all you can about your diabetes can help you stay in control of the condition.

eating tips and recipes, or a variety of fitness opportunities such as ballroom dancing or yoga. You can check a nearby community center or fitness center to see what classes they offer. Some health insurers also offer diabetes resources and classes for members and nonmembers alike at brick-and-mortar retail stores. Check with your health insurer for options.

- **Get moving with easy-to-use fitness technology.** Physical activity offers huge benefits for people with diabetes, including lowering blood glucose levels, helping with weight loss, and controlling blood cholesterol and blood pressure. Fitness trackers and apps for phones and tablets make it easier to incorporate physical activity into your daily routine. For example, the Blue Cross “do.” app can help you choose activities and set reminders throughout the day to stand up, stretch, walk and more.

By successfully managing your diabetes, you can improve your quality of life and help prevent complications down the road—including cardiovascular disease, nerve damage, eye damage, hearing impairment and more.

A diabetes diagnosis changes your life, but your new norm can lead to changes that can help you feel better and stay healthier.

Learn More

For further information about diabetes self-management education and how you can help take control of your diabetes, go to www.bluecrossmn.com/newnorm.