

# Health Awareness

## Don't Be Overwhelmed By Diabetes—Grab A Partner

(NAPSA)—Although most people know eating well and being physically active are part of a healthy lifestyle, for the more than 20 million Americans with diabetes, these activities are just a part of the self-care routine necessary to avoid serious complications.

Many people with diabetes feel overwhelmed as they work to eat healthy foods, exercise, monitor their blood sugar, take medications and schedule regular check-ups. By building a team of partners in care, however, these people can find diabetes self-care doesn't have to mean going it alone.

"As a diabetes educator, I help people with diabetes identify barriers that keep them from taking better care of themselves. Together, we create a plan to overcome them," says American Association of Diabetes Educators (AADE) President Donna Rice. "Often, the best solutions involve getting support from health care professionals, family and friends."

Partners can help improve diabetes self-care in several key areas, which the AADE has identified as the AADE7™:

- Healthy eating
- Being active
- Monitoring
- Taking medication
- Problem solving
- Reducing risks
- Healthy coping.



**Diabetes self-care doesn't have to mean going it alone when you have a team of partners in care.**

Below are some challenges people with diabetes face and suggestions for how partners can help.

### **Buddy Up**

**Challenge:** You know it's important to be physically active but it's hard to stay motivated to exercise.

**Solution:** Ask a family member or friend to be your workout buddy. If the gym isn't for you, meet a neighbor at the corner for a walk each morning or kick a soccer ball with your kids after school.

### **Find Your Foods**

**Challenge:** Eating healthy foods will help you control your diabetes but you're afraid eating well means giving up the foods you like.

**Solution:** A diabetes educator can help you create a meal plan

that includes a variety of foods you like that are good for you. Look over your plan before you go to the grocery store or give it to the shopper in your house.

### **Use Friendly Reminders**

**Challenge:** Your doctor said it's important to check your blood sugar and take your medications at the same time each day but you can't seem to remember to do it.

**Solution:** Ask a loved one to call you at the same time each day with a reminder to monitor and take your medication. Use this daily chat to keep track of your health by taking note of how you're feeling—if you're tired every afternoon, it may be time to check in with your doctor.

### **Who Are Care Partners?**

A care team can include anyone who offers you help, knowledge and support to take care of your diabetes, including:

- Primary care physician
- Diabetes educator
- Endocrinologists
- Ophthalmologists
- Podiatrists
- Friends and family members.

To get more self-care ideas, connect with others who have diabetes and find a diabetes educator nearby, go to [mydiabetespartner.org](http://mydiabetespartner.org). This online resource also provides tips to help family members and friends act as a partner in care for someone with diabetes.