



**AMERICAN ASSOCIATION
OF DIABETES EDUCATORS**

100 West Monroe Street
Suite 400
Chicago, IL 60603

(800) 338-3633

www.diabeteseducator.org



live life

to the fullest

Team up with
a diabetes educator



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you are not alone

with your diabetes

More than 18 million Americans have this chronic medical condition and, like you, require a lifetime of treatment.

Diabetes is a complex disease that requires daily self-management—making healthy food choices, staying physically active, monitoring your blood sugar, and taking medications as prescribed by your doctor. It is also important to talk regularly with your diabetes management team to problem solve, reduce risks for complications, and cope with lifestyle changes.

Successful self-management will help you feel better and can reduce your chance of developing complications including heart disease, eye disorders, kidney disease, nerve damage, and lower leg amputation.

Diabetes is also a very personal disease. Upon being diagnosed, it's not uncommon to feel a certain amount of fear. Fear of the unknown. Fear about how your lifestyle may change. Fear that you will experience life-threatening complications.

As a key member of your diabetes management team, diabetes educators help you learn how to take care of yourself – they guide you through your treatment and help you with any fears, issues, and problems you encounter along the way.



"Sometimes diabetes can frustrate me. Working with my diabetes educator, I've learned to handle so many of the challenges diabetes presents."

partnering with a diabetes educator

Diabetes educators are health care professionals – nurses, dietitians, pharmacists, doctors, exercise physiologists, podiatrists, and social workers, among others – who specialize in the care and education of people with diabetes. Many diabetes educators have also earned the certified diabetes educator (CDE) credential, which requires considerable experience and passage of a rigorous national exam.



Diabetes educators work in a variety of settings. You may see them in hospitals teaching group classes or working with patients individually. They may

also be found in doctors' offices, pharmacies, home health agencies, neighborhood clinics, or in private practice. Wherever you find them, the care is always personalized and of the highest quality.

“No diabetes management tool—no new oral agent, insulin or medical device—is as important as the services of a certified diabetes educator.”

Christopher Saudek, MD

Professor of Medicine at Johns Hopkins University,
Baltimore, MD

creating a treatment plan that's right for you

Diabetes educators realize that diabetes is a very personal disease. By getting to know you as an individual, they can work with you to create a self-management plan that meets your needs – one based on your age, school or work schedule, as well as your daily activities, family demands, eating habits, and health problems.

Diabetes educators also understand that successful diabetes management is a team effort. Family is often encouraged to join you in learning how to make healthy food choices, developing a plan for regular physical activity, monitoring your blood sugar, and learning how and when to take your diabetes pills or insulin.



*“With my diabetes educator's help,
I can still include my favorite foods
in my diet.”*

the elements of successful self-management with the AADE 7 Self-Care Behaviors

Diabetes educators help you maneuver through the complexities of the disease. They counsel you on how to incorporate healthy eating and physical activity into your life, monitor your blood sugar to avoid the risk of complications, and give you the ability to problem solve and adjust emotionally to diabetes.

Diabetes educators focus on seven key behaviors that promote successful self-management. Called the AADE 7 Self-Care Behaviors, they are:

Healthy eating

Making healthy food choices, understanding portion sizes, and learning the best times to eat are important in managing your diabetes. By making appropriate food selections, children and teenagers grow and develop as they would if they didn't have diabetes. And, by controlling their weight, many adults may be able to manage their condition for a time without medications.

Being active

Regular activity is important for overall fitness, weight management, and blood sugar control. With your health care provider's approval, a diabetes educator can help you develop an exercise plan that is right for you and one you will enjoy doing.

Monitoring

It's critical that you monitor your blood sugar on a daily basis. A diabetes educator can help you determine which meter best meets your needs, show you how to properly test your blood sugar, and instruct you on how to use the results to adjust your self-management routine.

Taking medication

Diabetes is a progressive condition. Depending on what type you have, your health care team will be able to determine which medications you should be taking. Diabetes educators help you understand how your medications work. They can show you how to inject insulin or help you understand how your diabetes pills work and when you should take them.



*"I'm as active as ever.
My diabetes educator taught me
the importance of exercise for good health
and improved blood sugars."*

AADE 7 Self-Care Behaviors (cont.)

Problem solving

Managing changes in blood sugar levels is vital to managing your diabetes. Diabetes educators can help you move from novice to expert as you learn how to recognize and respond to unanticipated situations of low and high blood sugar and sick days.

Reducing risks

Having diabetes puts you at risk for a multitude of related complications. People with diabetes need regular eye, foot, and dental exams. They also need to avoid behaviors such as smoking and excessive alcohol consumption that can increase the risk for other complications. Diabetes educators can help you understand what you need and work with you to seek out additional professional help, if necessary.

Healthy coping

Diabetes educators can help you identify difficulties you may face while living with your diabetes. They can provide support by encouraging you to talk about your concerns and fears and can help you learn what you can control and offer ways for you to cope with what you cannot.

Regardless of the situation, diabetes educators give you the strategies and support you need to successfully live with your diabetes...and the potential to live your life to the fullest.

team up with a diabetes educator

- Learn how to balance your eating, physical activity, medication, and blood sugar monitoring routines
- Incorporate lifestyle needs, such as cultural eating habits and exercise preferences, into your management plan
- Make traveling and dining out easier and healthier
- Learn how to prevent, recognize and treat high and low blood sugars, and devise a plan for sick days
- Help prevent or delay other complications such as heart disease, blindness, kidney failure, nerve damage, and sexual problems
- Learn prevention, early recognition, and treatment of foot problems
- Decrease your health care costs by reducing the need for expensive hospital stays and the treatment of complications
- Develop healthy coping strategies and problem-solving skills
- Improve your confidence in your ability to manage your diabetes

To find a diabetes
educator near you,

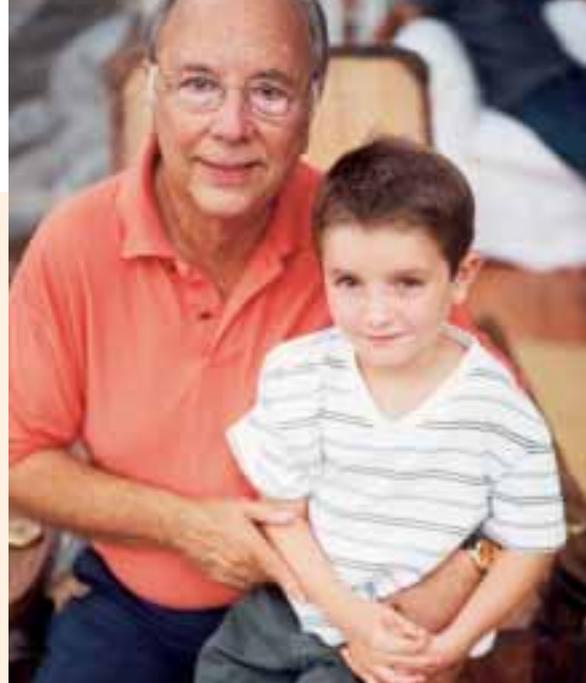
call 1-800-TEAMUP4 (se habla español),
or go to www.diabeteseducator.org

diabetes educator

phone number



*"Thanks to the knowledge and caring
of my diabetes educator, I realized that
having diabetes wasn't the end of life
as it could be, but rather the beginning
of life as it should be."*



achieve
real results
with a diabetes educator