

# Depression and Diabetes: What to Know

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Depression, like anxiety, is a common mental health challenge that affects up to 5% of people worldwide. It impacts mental, emotional, and physical well-being in various ways, including feelings of sadness, anxiety, emptiness, and hopelessness, among others.

For individuals with diabetes, managing both conditions can be especially challenging. Controlling blood sugar levels is important for those with diabetes and requires daily behaviors like taking your medication, making healthy food choices, exercising, and managing stress. When depression enters the picture, it can create a double challenge, making it harder to stay on top of diabetes management.

The good news is that there are tools to help manage and reduce the impact of both depression and diabetes. By incorporating mindfulness, self-compassion, and acceptance into your daily routine, you can transform negative thought patterns into positive ones.

## Mindfulness, Self-Compassion, and Acceptance

**Label Your Thoughts and Feelings:** When distressing thoughts or feelings arise, pause and label them without judgment. For example, say to yourself, "There's that 'I'm worthless' thought again."

**Acknowledge and Accept:** Recognize that these thoughts and feelings are a part of you. Accept your brain's intention to help but challenge its conclusions.

**Embrace Comforting Doubt:** Give yourself permission to doubt the accuracy of negative messages. Focus on the relief that comes from questioning their validity.

**Speak Kindly to Yourself:** Engage in positive self-talk, allowing yourself to sit in the goodness and peace of the moment. Show yourself love and kindness.

## Something Is Better Than Nothing

Avoid all-or-nothing thinking. Instead of setting unrealistic expectations, focus on small, achievable goals. This could be as simple as planning for the next meal or task.

Break free from the trap of perfectionism and guilt. Doing something is better than doing nothing, and small steps can lead to positive changes.

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## A Note on Medications and Resources

If the tools mentioned are not sufficient, consider speaking with your primary care provider about antidepressant medications.

Joining support groups, such as those provided by [Depression and Bipolar Alliance](#), [National Association of Mental Illness \(NAMI\)](#), [Emotions Anonymous](#), [American Diabetes Association](#), and [National Institute of Mental Health](#), can offer additional resources and community support.

Remember, it's okay to seek help and take small steps toward improvement. The tools mentioned here can be practiced over time to promote well-being and break the cycle of depression and its impact on diabetes management.