

Did You Know...?

Diabetes is a lot of work, but as the friend or family member of someone with diabetes there are things you can do to help make coping with this disease easier.



Supporting someone with diabetes

Diabetes is a lifetime condition that requires many changes. Habits are not easy to change!

Diabetes is often challenging

- There is a lot to know.
- New information is always coming out.
- Not everything you hear is true.
- One's diabetes changes over time.

Diabetes requires good communication

Diabetes can mean lifestyle changes for loved ones, too

Diabetes causes stress for caregivers and support people

How you can help your family member/friend/loved one...

- ✓ Attend diabetes self-management education classes with them.
- ✓ Learn carb counting and label reading.
- ✓ Know the signs and symptoms of high and low blood sugars and what to do about each.
- ✓ Help develop a system for taking medicines or doing blood sugar checks regularly.
- ✓ Help with foot checks if they have trouble.
- ✓ Consider using website information sources that end with .edu, .gov, or .org.

- ✓ Ask what they want your help with to take care of their diabetes.
- ✓ Are there specific tasks they need help with?
- ✓ What doesn't help them? Being the "diabetes police" can cause hard feelings.

- ✓ Set a good example with exercising and eating healthy.
- ✓ Buy and make healthy foods; pack healthy foods for on-the-go eating.
- ✓ Offer to go with them to doctor visits be an extra "ear."

- ✓ Remember to take care of yourself.
- ✓ Accept that the person with diabetes has to make their own choices and take action.
- ✓ Share how diabetes affects you. Clear the air but don't nag!
- ✓ Find a support group.
- ✓ Attend Personal Action Toward Health (PATH) [www. mihealthyprograms.org](http://www.mihealthyprograms.org).

References : American Diabetes Association: <http://www.diabetes.org/living-with-diabetes/connect-with-others/support/>
<http://www.diabetesinmichigan.org/EdHandout/PDF/Support>.