

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?



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Diabetes and Mental Health

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Overview

- ▶ Why should we focus on diabetes and mental health?
- ▶ What are the most common emotional challenges for those with diabetes?
- ▶ What is the difference between Diabetes Burnout and Diabetes Distress?
- ▶ What you should listen for in order to help your patients


Most common mental health themes for persons with diabetes

- ▶ Anxiety
- ▶ Shame
- ▶ Guilt
- ▶ Hopelessness
- ▶ Frustration
- ▶ Anger

Diabetes Distress and Diabetes Burnout

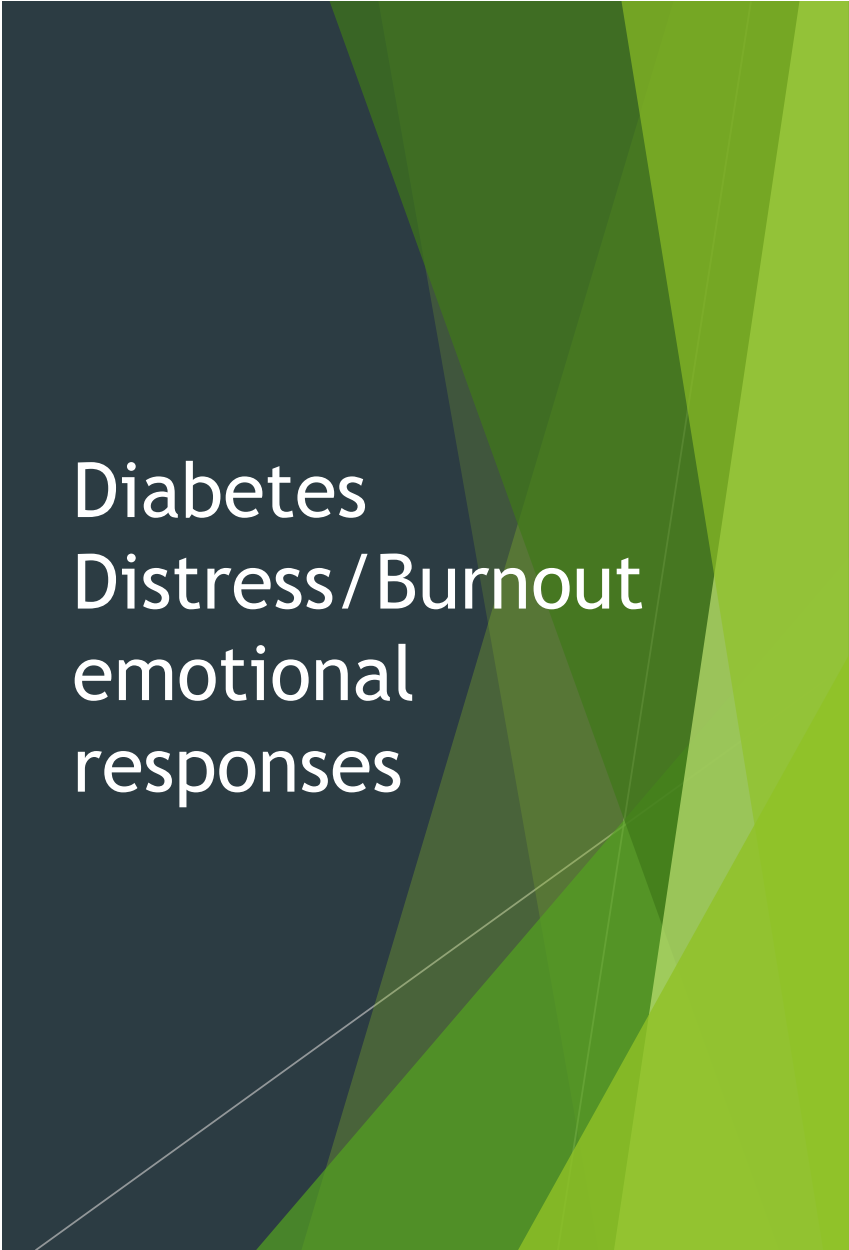
- ▶ Diabetes distress is a rational emotional response to the threat of a life changing illness and can happen at any time during life with diabetes, including right at the time of diagnosis
- ▶ Diabetes burnout arises due to fatigue after a long time period of managing the day to day demands of this illness

- ▶ Around the time of diagnosis and at the time of learning how to self-manage diabetes
- ▶ At the emergence of a complication
- ▶ At the time of pregnancy
- ▶ Weight gain or loss (can lead to diabulimia or related eating disorders)
- ▶ Adding or switching a medication
- ▶ Introducing new technology for management
- ▶ Switching healthcare plans
- ▶ Switching healthcare providers (finding a new ¹_{SEP} doctor)



Common times for Diabetes Distress

- ▶ Powerlessness
- ▶ Negative Social Perceptions
- ▶ Physician Distress
- ▶ Friend/Family Distress
- ▶ Hypoglycemia Distress
- ▶ Management Distress
- ▶ Eating Distress



Diabetes Distress / Burnout emotional responses

Messages from patients: How could the health care team help?

- ▶ Ask me how I am feeling emotionally
- ▶ Don't judge me
- ▶ How I am doing is not necessarily related to my A1C result
- ▶ Try spending a day in my shoes
- ▶ Celebrate my successes
- ▶ Help me analyze my blood sugar trends
- ▶ Don't use scare tactics

How can we help those experiencing diabetes distress or burnout

- ▶ Listen
- ▶ Validate
- ▶ Language
- ▶ Suggest mental health resources
- ▶ www.leelakausch.com..visit my website for resources: books, websites, diabetes on line community info

- ▶ Attend a support group
- ▶ Join online chat rooms and groups, visit diabetes websites
- ▶ Avoid comparison to others who seem to be diabetes superstars
- ▶ Read articles, books about diabetes and mental health
- ▶ Consider journaling feelings, mindfulness exercises, meditation
- ▶ Consider seeing a therapist who specializes in diabetes or chronic illness
- ▶ Talk openly about diabetes and the feelings about it
- ▶ Practice kindness towards self and recognize that perfect diabetes does not exist.
- ▶ Get involved in local advocacy groups
- ▶ Take a look at diabetes goals and try changing it up a bit



What can
patients do to
help
themselves?

When to refer patients to a mental health provider

- ▶ If self care remains impaired after tailored diabetes education
- ▶ If you notice symptoms of disordered eating behavior, an eating disorder, or disrupted patterns of eating
- ▶ If there is Intentional omission of insulin or oral medication to cause weight loss
- ▶ Repeated hospitalizations for diabetic ketoacidosis or severe hypoglycemic events

How to refer to mental health providers

- ▶ Encourage patient to check with insurance provider for mental health coverage
- ▶ Seek a mental health professional with expertise in diabetes or chronic illness
- ▶ American Diabetes Association has listings of mental health providers with diabetes specialty
- ▶ Psychology Today website has nationwide listings, including those with chronic illness specialty
- ▶ Follow up to see how patient did with finding a counselor

Resources for patients and for you

- ▶ **Book recs:** Think Like a Pancreas by Scheiner, The Diabetic Health Journal by Bonjorno, Diabetes Burnout by Polonsky
- ▶ **Web site recs:** Beyondtypeone and Beyondtypetwo
- ▶ **Calming apps:** Insight Timer
- ▶ Visit www.leelakausch.com for more ideas

Final thoughts

- ▶ Together let us strive to create a healing space for those in our community whose lives are affected by diabetes, where exploring one's illness story and mental health struggles can lead to embracing life each day resulting in improved health outcomes