

# Cultural Daily

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## How to Navigate Life with Diabetes

Our Friends · Tuesday, June 16th, 2020

Maintaining adequate blood sugar levels is a serious concern for those with diabetes. If your blood sugar levels are too high or drop too low, you can suffer from medical problems like:

- Blindness or vision impairment
- Foot infections and ulcers
- Strokes and heart attacks
- Kidney failure and dialysis
- Reduced blood flow to the limbs
- Damage to the nervous system

As intimidating as diabetes seems, it's a manageable condition when you take some precautions. Here, we'll offer some ways you can navigate life comfortably with diabetes.

### Learn to Manage Your Stress

As someone with diabetes, you need to be able to effectively monitor and manage your blood sugar levels. To keep yourself in good health, you need to be able to focus on these tasks.

Identify any factors in your life that are causing stress. Develop ways to deal with them so you can limit unnecessary distractions and focus on taking care of yourself.

Not only can stress affect how you manage your diabetes, but it can also worsen your physical condition. Stress can raise blood sugar levels and decrease insulin sensitivity, which can create further health issues for those who have diabetes.

### Stay Well-Hydrated

Watching what you eat is obviously important when you have diabetes. However, you need to make sure you are staying well-hydrated too!

For the average person, the recommended water intake is around 8 cups per day. However, you should drink however much will make you feel hydrated.

As someone with diabetes, drinking enough water has several benefits. For one, you can avoid the spikes in blood sugar caused by dehydration. And, drinking water will keep you full. When you have a full stomach, you'll prevent overeating and keep your blood sugar levels stable.

## Exercise Regularly

When you exercise, your muscles use glucose to function. This means that as you are running, walking, or lifting weights, you will be lowering your body's blood glucose levels naturally. This can be helpful to someone who experiences high blood sugar levels.

On the other hand, intense exercise can raise your adrenaline and cause your body's blood glucose levels to skyrocket.

To avoid drastic fluctuations, make sure to test your blood sugar levels while exercising.

## Consider Getting a Service Dog

Some people with diabetes have service dogs. These trained animals can detect when your blood sugar rises too high or drops too low by performing a gesture like pawing at your knee.

If you have one, you should [register your service dog](#). This way, you'll be able to stay up-to-date on the latest federal law updates regarding service dogs. You should understand your legal rights as an owner of a service animal. This way, your dog will be able to accompany you where you go in public and help prevent complications associated with your condition.

## Reach Out to Others with Diabetes

Diabetes is a more prevalent condition than you may think. According to a 2020 report from the [Diabetes Research Institute Foundation](#), more than 34 million Americans, or 10% of the U.S. population, have diabetes.

There are plenty of online and in-person support groups for people with diabetes. Start your search online. If you are comfortable doing so, find a local meeting. Connecting with others is invaluable. You'll be able to hear their experiences and get first-hand advice that you may not be able to receive in your everyday life. You can also talk through your own problems and find solutions and solace.

Whether you have just been diagnosed or have had diabetes for years, you may find yourself with unprecedented challenges. Use this guide to help manage your condition and live your best life!

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