



Living with diabetes

Being diagnosed

Being diagnosed with diabetes can be a very difficult time for children, young people and families. It can be shocking, surprising and sad for some. Normally a diagnosis has happened after you, or your family member, has been very unwell and as a result it can be a lot to take in.

Most people have a mixture of emotions, confusion and questions after diagnosis. “Why did this happen to me?”, “What does this mean for my life?” and “How will I cope?” It can feel frightening when you are given the responsibility of looking after your diabetes, having to adapt to a new routine and it can be scary learning about complications – which you will be told early on.

Although it can feel as if you have to get your diabetes care ‘right’ as soon as possible, you also will need to take your time – forgive yourself for the normal and natural ups and downs –you are only human.

If the emotional rollercoaster of a new diagnosis is making it hard for you, please do talk to friends, family and the team – if talking is difficult, try writing down your feeling, fears and questions, to share or keep private.

Remember we, the diabetes team, are here to explain things to you more than once, as we know how hard it is to take all the information in.

Small steps that can help you

- Realise it is normal and okay to feel lots of different emotions.
- Try not to be hard on yourself for how you are feeling.
- Keep doing what you like – do not lose who you are and what you want to be just because of diabetes.
- Chose a role model, who has diabetes, and remember what is possible e.g., Sir Steve Redgrave – Olympic gold medal rower, Halle Berry - Actress and Bond Girl, Theresa May, Prime Minister.
- Set small and specific goals for your diabetes if you get off track.
- Try to confide in someone – it’s usually better than being alone. Talk to your family and friends, they may be unaware of how you are feeling.
- When someone asks: “How are you feeling?” don’t be afraid to tell them what you really feel e.g., “I’m really angry!!”