

Involving Patients in Making Decisions About Diabetes Care

Healthcare providers—and their patients—have multiple options to consider when managing diabetes. While some patients may say they want their providers to make some choices for them, **patient participation in decision-making has been associated with:**

- **Better health outcomes**¹⁻³
- **Improved adherence**^{4*}
- **Higher levels of satisfaction with care**¹⁻³

Shared decision-making is a process by which a healthcare choice is made jointly by the provider and the patient.¹ Many providers find shared decision-making helpful because it can bridge the gap between patient-centered care and evidence-based medicine.¹

For diabetes, the main management options are diet, exercise, and medication. Talk with your patients about their preferences in these areas.

Essential Elements of Shared Decision-Making⁵

Working together, the patient and provider should:

- Explain the problem that needs to be addressed
- Review options, and discuss the pros and cons
- Make a joint decision that takes into account both the provider's recommendations and the patient's values and preferences

Suggestions for Implementing Shared Decision-Making for Diabetes Care

- Ensure that patients are sufficiently informed about key issues before making a decision⁶
 - Explain that different people may have different views about what matters most⁶
- Elicit and/or clarify the patient's values and preferences³
 - You may need to ask specific questions. For example:
 - "What types of exercise or physical activities do you enjoy?"
 - "How do you plan meals during a typical week? How often do you: Cook? Eat out? Order takeout?"
 - "Tell me what you know and how you feel about the different forms of diabetes medicines."
- Look for ways to incorporate shared decision-making into your daily practice
 - When time is short, consider whether another provider (nurse, nutritionist, physical therapist, pharmacist, etc.) can help the patient understand his or her options³

Use shared decision-making to increase patient involvement in their diabetes care.

* Among patients with diabetes taking antidepressant medications.

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