

Diabetes distress vs depression

KNOWING THE DIFFERENCE, AND WHY IT HELPS

Similar feelings, different problems

Feeling flat, tired and just 'over it' can be a sign of diabetes distress, depression, or both. Understanding some of the similarities and differences can be helpful for finding the right support for you.



	Diabetes distress	Depression
Where it comes from	The demands of living with diabetes: the routine, the numbers, the worry.	Can arrive with no clear cause, and isn't tied to any one part of life.
What it feels like	Overwhelmed, frustrated, guilty or burnt out about diabetes specifically.	Low mood or loss of interest in things you usually enjoy, across most of life.
What tends to help	Sharing the load, adjusting expectations, problem-solving, mindfulness and cognitive restructuring exercises.	Support from your GP or a psychologist. Therapy works, and medication helps some people.



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What you can do

- Talk to someone. Your GP or diabetes educator can help you understand the difference between diabetes distress and depression, and they might give you a short questionnaire to better understand what you are experiencing.
- The DAWN wellbeing program has some helpful modules and exercises designed to teach you skills to manage your diabetes distress.
- A mental health treatment plan gives you Medicare-subsidised sessions with a psychologist to help with feelings of depression. Talking to your GP is a great place to start.

Both depression and diabetes distress are common and can be present at the same time for some people.

If you need support now

- Lifeline: 13 11 14 (24 hours)
- Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467 (24 hours)
- Beyond Blue: 1300 22 4636
- 13YARN (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander crisis support): 13 92 76
- In an emergency, call 000.

For further support

- Your GP or diabetes team.
- Beyond Blue: 1300 22 4636 · beyondblue.org.au

