



Diabetes Education

Diabetes education, also known as diabetes self-management training (DSMT) or diabetes self-management education (DSME), is defined as a collaborative process through which people with or at risk for diabetes gain the knowledge and skills needed to modify behavior and successfully self-manage the disease and its related conditions.

DSMT/DSME is an interactive, ongoing process involving the person with diabetes (or the caregiver or family) and a diabetes educator(s). The intervention aims to achieve optimal health status, better quality of life and reduce the need for costly health care.

Diabetes education focuses on seven self-care behaviors that are essential for improved health status and greater quality of life.

The AADE7™ Self-Care Behaviors are:

- Healthy eating
- Being active
- Monitoring
- Taking medication
- Problem solving
- Healthy coping
- Reducing risks

Diabetes education is most often provided by diabetes educators. Diabetes educators give people with diabetes the knowledge, skills and tools they need to successfully manage their diabetes and avoid many of the complications associated with the disease.

Diabetes Education:

- Is guided by the best available science-based evidence.
- Incorporates the needs, goals and life experiences of the person with or at risk of diabetes.
- Supports other healthcare providers through a continuum of interventions, ranging from knowledge and skills to supporting behavior change and clinical co-management.
- Optimizes the health of people with diabetes, thereby allowing them to lead more productive lives at work, home and in the community.
- Recognizes the importance of cost-effective diabetes prevention and management as a way to maximize healthcare resources.
- Provides value for every dollar invested.

Diabetes Educators:

- Provide their services in hospitals, physician offices, pharmacies, managed care organizations, home health care and other settings.
- May be nurses, pharmacists, dietitians and other trained professionals.
- Counsel patients on how to incorporate healthy eating and physical activity into their life. They also help patients understand how their medications work, teach them how to monitor their blood glucose to avoid the risk of complications, and give them the ability to problem solve and adjust emotionally to diabetes.

Diabetes educators provide diabetes education to:

- Help individuals identify barriers to diabetes self-management
 - How to be confident in managing diabetes
- Facilitate problem solving and coping skills
 - How to balance eating, physical activity, medication and blood sugar monitoring routines
- Achieve positive behavior change
 - How to incorporate lifestyle needs, such as cultural eating habits and exercise preferences, into your management plan
- Achieve optimal clinical outcomes, health status and quality of life and prevent or delay complications
 - Complications may include heart disease, blindness, kidney failure, nerve damage and sexual problems
- Promote cost-effective care management

Most professional diabetes educators are members of the American Association of Diabetes Educators. Some diabetes educators are certified diabetes educators (CDE) or board certified advanced diabetes managers (BC-ADM), having met certain eligibility and exam requirements.