stack the deck
against diabetes complications
Q&A:
True or False? As long as you can see well, diabetes is not affecting your eyes.
Q&A:
Myth or Reality?
Insulin causes blindness.
Q&A:

True or False? Controlling blood sugar levels can help people with diabetes avoid eye problems.
Discussion:

What symptoms do you think a person with diabetes might have if they have diabetes-related eye disease?
Q&A:

Is diabetes the cause of all eye problems that occur in people with diabetes? What else can cause changes in your vision?
Jane, a person with diabetes for more than 25 years, has noticed that she can’t see as well as she used to, and she has been seeing black spots. Is this problem caused by her diabetes? What should she do?
Activity:

**Matching game:** Match the eye condition on the left with its correct description on the right. Work with a partner or discuss with the group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Cataracts</td>
<td>1. Spots, webs or strands that “float” or drift across your field of vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Glaucoma</td>
<td>2. Damage to the retina due to diabetes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Macular degeneration</td>
<td>3. Fluid leaking into the center of the retina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Macular edema</td>
<td>4. Commonly known as pressure build-up in the eye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Retinopathy</td>
<td>5. Clouding of lens of eye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Floaters</td>
<td>6. Gradual destruction of sharp central vision</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity:

Matching game: These pictures show how your vision can be affected by different eye problems. Which picture do you think represents these eye conditions?

A. Cataracts
B. Glaucoma
C. Diabetic Retinopathy

Pictures courtesy of the National Eye Institute.
Q&A:

What do your kidneys do?

A. Balance body fluids
B. Produce urine
C. Remove waste from blood
D. All of the above
Q&A:

If you have kidney damage, what test measures how well your kidneys are working?

A. Blood glucose (sugar)
B. Cholesterol
C. Creatinine
D. Ketones
Q&A: Myth or Reality?
Eating too much protein causes kidney damage.
Discussion:

Why are people with diabetes at higher risk for kidney disease?
Discussion:

What are the warning signs of kidney disease?
Discussion:

If you are told you have protein in your urine, what are the next steps?
Discussion:

What happens when/if your kidneys stop working?
Activity:

Name three things you can do right now to help keep your kidneys healthy.

1. ___________________

2. ___________________

3. ___________________
HEART DISEASE

Q&A:
Myth or Reality?
Women don’t get heart disease. It is a man’s disease.
Q&A:

Should people with diabetes take an aspirin a day to reduce the risk of a heart attack?
Q&A:

If you have diabetes, what are healthy goals for your cholesterol levels?
Discussion:

Which of these things puts you at a higher risk for a heart attack?

- Family history
- Having diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Obesity
- High cholesterol
- Inactivity
- Smoking
Discussion:

Heart disease is 2-4 times more common in people with diabetes than in those without diabetes. Does that surprise you?
Discussion:

Being active can help decrease the risk of heart disease...So, why should you talk to your healthcare provider about your heart health before getting more active?
Activity:

List two things that you can do today that can improve your heart health. Discuss how you could do these with the person next to you (or with the group).

1. __________________________________________

2. __________________________________________
Activity:

There are many symptoms of a heart attack. Some are different for people with diabetes. List two possible symptoms.

1. ___________________

2. ___________________
Q&A:

What is diabetic neuropathy?
Q&A:
True or False?
Nerve damage only affects your feet.
Q&A:

True or False?
People with diabetes can help prevent nerve damage by controlling their blood sugar.
Discussion:

What are some of the symptoms that may occur if you have nerve damage in your feet?
Discussion:

Gastroparesis is a nerve problem that can affect people with diabetes. What do you think it means? What might you feel if you have gastroparesis?
Discussion:

Why is it important to take off your shoes and socks at your diabetes care visit?
Activity:

Draw a picture of a human body (stick figures are OK!). Circle the parts of the body that can be affected by nerve damage related to diabetes.
Activity:

List 3 things people with diabetes should consider when buying shoes.

1. ____________________________

2. ____________________________

3. ____________________________
Q&A:

True or False? Both men and women with diabetes can experience sexual dysfunction.
Q&A:

True or False? Depression affects many people with diabetes.
Q&A:

Myth or Reality? If you have one complication related to your diabetes, you will probably have them all.
Q&A:

John has diabetes and his feet are numb all of the time. Today, he complains of a corn on his right foot. What advice would you give John?

A. Tell him to rub alcohol on his feet twice a day
B. Tell him to soak his feet in warm water and use a knife to cut away the dead skin
C. Encourage him to see a podiatrist (foot doctor)
D. Tell him to go to the self-care aisle of the pharmacy to select a corn remover
Q&A:

How can high blood glucose levels cause problems with your teeth and gums?
Discussion:

Did you know that diabetes can affect your skin? What types of skin problems could be related to diabetes?
Discussion:

What are some common symptoms of depression?
Activity:

What do you do each day to take care of your teeth? Name 2 things you can do to reduce your risk of gum disease.

1. ___________________

2. ___________________
Discussion:
What other types of health problems affect people with diabetes?
Debbie:

AGE: 56
TYPE 2 DIABETES
Debbie is a 56 year old woman who was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes three years ago. Her A1C is 8.2% and she is taking three different oral diabetes medications. Debbie has been waking up at night with “pins and needles” in her feet. She works in retail, and is on her feet a lot, but she regularly gets pedicures at her local beauty salon with hopes that that will help her foot pain.

Questions:

1. Is her foot pain related to diabetes?
2. What should she do?
3. What type of healthcare provider would you recommend that she see?
Jerry:

AGE: 43
TYPE 2 DIABETES
Jerry was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes 10 years ago. He has been taking twice daily insulin injections for the past 5 years and has gained 15 pounds during that time. He weighs 250 pounds. Jerry thinks he’s going to die early of heart disease since both of his parents had heart disease. He thinks his blood pressure is fine, and he recently learned that his LDL (“bad”) cholesterol is 120 mg/dL.

Questions:

1. Is Jerry going to have heart disease just because his parents did?
2. What can he do to lower his risk of heart disease?
3. What else can Jerry start doing to improve his overall health?
Sam:

AGE: 41
TYPE 1 DIABETES
Sam has had type 1 diabetes for 25 years. He recently found out he has Stage 1 Kidney Disease. What can he do to prevent progression of the disease and avoid dialysis? What advice would you give him?

Questions:

1. What would you say to Sam?
2. What role does blood sugar play in delaying the progression of kidney disease?
3. Who should he turn to for help?
Sharon:
AGE: 36
TYPE 2 DIABETES
Sharon goes through phases in her diabetes management. Sometimes she’s good about testing her blood sugar regularly and taking her medications as prescribed, but then sometimes she forgets or just lets it slide. Her A1C over the past 4 years has been above 10%. She knows she needs to take care of her diabetes all the time, but it’s hard to stay motivated. What would you tell Sharon?

**Questions:**

1. How can Sharon improve her glucose control?
2. What are some things that Sharon can do to help her stay motivated?
3. Is there anyone Sharon can turn to for help?
George:

AGE: 61
TYPE 2 DIABETES
George has type 2 diabetes and knows that his cholesterol is high, but he is concerned about all of the side effects that he sees on the TV commercials for the different cholesterol and diabetes medicines. He is getting older and generally feels well, so he doesn’t want to start taking medications, even though his doctor says he should. He’s thinking about just getting the medications and only taking them if he starts feeling sick.

Questions:

1. What would you tell George about the risks and benefits of taking medications?
2. What other changes could George consider that may help reduce his cholesterol levels and help him manage his diabetes?
Mike:
AGE: 57
TYPE 2 DIABETES
Mike is 57 years old and has had type 2 diabetes for 20 years. He and his wife have been married for 34 years and have three grown children. Mike and his wife are enjoying their time together and travel often. Lately, Mike has noticed that he is unable to achieve an erection capable of having intercourse with his wife. He still wants to have sex, but is unsure of what he should do to address the problem. He is embarrassed to talk about it with his female doctor.

Questions:

1. Could Mike’s problem be associated with his diabetes?
2. What advice would you give Mike?
SCENARIOS

Cindy:
AGE: 28
TYPE 1 DIABETES

Sponsored by
Cindy is a 28 year old woman who has had type 1 diabetes for 10 years. She went to the doctor today complaining of nausea, bloating, and abdominal cramping. She says that her appetite has decreased recently and that she gets full after eating only a few bites. She also feels tired all of the time, constantly drinks water and gets up at night to go to the bathroom. She generally only checks her blood glucose when she feels like it is high. Recent laboratory tests showed fasting plasma glucose of 224 mg/dL and A1C of 10.3%.

Questions:

1. What could be causing Cindy’s complaints?
2. What could she do to decrease the stomach symptoms?
3. What are some other complications that Cindy might have if her blood sugar levels stay so high?
SCENARIOS

Mary:
AGE: 52
TYPE 2 DIABETES
Fifteen years ago, Mary’s doctor told her she had “a touch of sugar” and prescribed her a pill to take every day. Since then, she hasn’t paid much attention to her diabetes because she didn’t think it was serious. Today, Mary noticed a small sore on the bottom of her foot that isn’t healing.

Questions:

1. What should Mary do now?
2. Why is her sore not healing? Is it because of her diabetes?
3. What steps should she take to start managing her diabetes?