

Emotional Impact of Living with Diabetes Assessment

Our bodies affect our mental health, and our mental health has a powerful effect on our bodies, and the daily challenges of being diabetic impact both. It's not uncommon for people with diabetes to experience emotional distress. This assessment tool will help determine the degree to which diabetes is impacting your emotional life and functioning.

As you answer these questions, think about how you have felt **during the last 30 days**.

	Not at All	A Little Bit	Somewhat	Often	Most of the Time	Almost Constantly
Diabetes leaves me no mental and/or physical energy for other things	0	1	2	3	4	5
I feel afraid, depressed, or angry when I think about living with diabetes	0	1	2	3	4	5
I feel ashamed about how I manage my diabetes	0	1	2	3	4	5
Friends and family are not supportive enough of my self-care efforts	0	1	2	3	4	5
Diabetes drives my life	0	1	2	3	4	5
Friends and family don't understand the burden of having diabetes	0	1	2	3	4	5
I feel overwhelmed by the day to day tasks involved in managing my diabetes	0	1	2	3	4	5
I lack motivation and energy to manage my diabetes	0	1	2	3	4	5
I feel ashamed for having diabetes	0	1	2	3	4	5
I feel hopeless when I think about my future with diabetes	0	1	2	3	4	5
Total each column:		_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Add together your item scores: _____ /10 = _____

What Does *Your* Score Mean?



What Can Your Score Tell You?

Diabetes is a beast, and at different points in life, the emotional and physical burdens affect us in different ways. Our ability to cope with the stress naturally varies over time. Here's what your assessment score says about where you are right now:

0-1: Diabetes presents daily tasks, hassles, worries, and interpersonal interactions that can be very difficult. Currently you seem to have a strong set of personal, medical, social and/or community resources, and at this time you are engaging with them in ways that are working well. It's a good idea to continue to actively cultivate personal relationships that feel supportive and understanding.

2-3: Right now, you are feeling the emotional toll of living with a tedious chronic illness. It could be helpful to spend some time thinking about what helps when you're feeling overwhelmed, scared or unmotivated. You may also want to check in with your diabetes educator. Talking to a psychotherapist who is knowledgeable about the daily demands of diabetes and who is sensitive to the special distress it causes may also be helpful.

4-5: You are currently experiencing a high level of emotional distress in relation to your diabetes. It's important to remember that this feeling is not permanent, though it may be necessary to seek additional support in order to feel and function better. Consider seeing a therapist, especially one who understands the special problems that diabetes causes. You might also schedule a visit with a trusted member of your healthcare team, like your endo or diabetes educator.

No matter the type, diabetes always comes with special emotional, physical, social and cultural burdens, and this can weigh a person down. These burdens are not always immediately visible, and so they are not understood by most people and sometimes they are even overlooked by healthcare professionals. Diabetes places special pressure on relationships. It also changes a person's self-perception. The emotional toll that comes from living with diabetes is often unknown to even closest family and friends, leaving the patient feeling isolated.

Psychotherapy can help with the management of a chronic illness, as well as be a supportive place to talk about all the feelings that having such a condition stirs up. It can help to bridge relationships, and it provides a space to freely explore ideas about and options for achieving a healthy sense of self.

My name is Rebecca Pastor, and I am a psychotherapist in private practice in Clayton. I provide insight-oriented therapy for a full range of mental health problems and diagnoses across the lifespan. I have a special interest in helping patients who struggle with Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes, obesity, body shame and weight issues, heart disease and heart conditions. I am able to help patients work through the emotional impact of living with a disease, and I can also help them comply with the daily demands of living with an illness. To talk more, contact me at 314-754-3247.