

Stress and Your Heart

Managing your risk factors for heart disease and stroke and the lifestyle changes needed to lower your risk can lead to another risk factor for heart disease, stress.

Stress itself can raise blood glucose levels.

“When I went into the doctor, he knew something was wrong immediately, because my skin had changed. Stuff I hadn't even paid attention, because I was so stressed and depressed and zero clue.”

Stress can also raise blood pressure which can damage blood vessels.

Emotionally, stress can get in the way of making healthy lifestyle choices.

For example, you may eat more to comfort yourself, not exercise or be active, or even return to other harmful habits which can lead to a cycle that is very hard to break.

Your diabetes care team can help. Work with them to set realistic goals so you can achieve them and be ready, maybe even eager, to take the next step.

Living with diabetes and heart disease can be very stressful emotionally.

Set aside time each day to relax. Work with your diabetes care team to choose a relaxation method that works best for you.

“I can walk the dog in the evenings, yes, and she likes to play outside. We do a lot of outside stuff, even gardening, pulling weeds; that kind of thing is my exercise.”

Hobbies can help you keep things in perspective and focus on what's important to you in your life.

Stress can impact your diabetes and increase your risk of heart disease and the serious health problems that it can cause.

Find ways to identify the stress in your life and take steps to lessen its impact on your health. You will feel better overall and enjoy each and every day.