



Take a minute:
Better Discussions
for better diabetes care support

Engaging patients who are new to diabetes: key takeaways

The Challenge: The diagnosis of diabetes can be extremely overwhelming for a person, and there is a lot to learn about successful diabetes management and self-care.

The Opportunity: Incorporate these important topics into your discussions with people who are new to diabetes:

- 1. “15-15 Rule” for hypoglycemia¹**
 - For blood sugar < 70 mg/dL, treat with 15 grams of glucose
 - Recheck blood sugar in 15 minutes; If it remains < 70 mg/dL, repeat these steps
- 2. The importance of taking medication as prescribed to have better diabetes management**
 - Address questions or concerns patients have about their medications
- 3. Diabetes section of pharmacy**
 - Show patient where diabetes self-care section is located and remind them to choose sugar-free OTC medications when available
- 4. Best practices for injecting insulin^{2,3}**
 - Review proper injection technique, site rotation and using a new needle for each injection
 - Dispense 4mm pen needles or 6mm needle insulin syringes, as consistent with clinical recommendations²
- 5. Discuss concerns and questions** to discover barriers to diabetes management and help patients find solutions
 - Barriers may include: remembering to take medication, cost of medication and supplies, incorporating healthy diet and exercise into lifestyle

Examples of good questions to drive patient engagement:

- I’ve noticed that you’re using insulin for the first time. Insulin could cause low blood sugar. Do you have a minute or two to discuss the signs and symptoms of low blood sugar and how to treat it?
- I see that this is the first time you are picking up diabetes medication. Do you have a minute to talk about these medications and discuss how you can work them into your daily routine?
- I know that diabetes can be overwhelming. What questions can I answer to make your diabetes management as easy as possible?

1. American Diabetes Association. Hypoglycemia (low blood sugar). <https://www.diabetes.org/diabetes/medication-management/blood-glucose-testing-and-control/hypoglycemia>. Accessed October 2019. 2. Frid AH, Kreugel G, Grassi G, et al. New insulin delivery recommendations. *Mayo Clin Proc.* 2016;91(9):1231-1255. 3. American Diabetes Association. Standards of Medical Care in Diabetes – 2019. *Diabetes Care.* 2019;42(1):S1-S194.

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