

People with diabetes are more likely to be depressed than people without diabetes. This is because taking care of diabetes is often complex, demanding, and frustrating. Depression is common in people with type 1 and type 2 diabetes, in people with poor blood glucose control, or in those suffering from complications due to diabetes. Unfortunately, depression is recognized and treated in less than 20% of cases.

### **How can you tell if you are depressed because of your diabetes?**

Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you felt:

- Depressed when you think about living with diabetes?
- Little interest or joy in the activities of your life?
- Helpless about the ability to make any positive changes with your diabetes treatment plan?

If you have felt any of these symptoms most of the day, nearly every day, during the last 2 weeks, then consider depression as a possible explanation.

### **What can you do about it?**

- Traditionally, it was thought that depression was caused by anger toward oneself. However, the more common reason for depression is a feeling of helplessness. Conversely, the way out of depression is to feel like you have more choices and control over your life. If you feel depressed you can begin by asking yourself two questions:
  1. What are you feeling so helpless about?
  2. Are you really as helpless as you feel or is there something that you can do to change the situation?
- It also helps to talk to your healthcare provider if you think you may be depressed. Your provider may refer you to counseling with a mental health specialist, and/or prescribe medication.
- You can do other things to improve your mood such as:
  - Pushing yourself to be with other people rather than alone.
  - Seeking support from family and friends.
  - Joining a diabetes support group (online or in person).
  - Prioritizing self-care changes that you need to make.
  - Limiting making changes to one at a time.
  - Remembering what helped before with similar problems.
  - Finding spiritual support, if appropriate.