

Diabetes is hard. It can be boring, relentless, overwhelming, and painful at times. For these reasons, it makes sense that managing diabetes can have an emotional burden on your life.

When glucose levels do not respond the way 'they are supposed to' this can be frustrating and stressful. It can also make a person resentful. This can also cause arguments between yourself and others because everyone is trying to find an answer to 'why is your glucose level so high or so low?'

### 'Diabetes Burnout' and Diabetes Distress

Diabetes burnout and diabetes distress are real things! This is where you grow tired of managing diabetes and you want to stop doing diabetes tasks. This can include checking glucose levels, getting data from technology, counting carbohydrates, and taking insulin or medicines. Diabetes burnout can also lead to depression.

It is important to make sure you have realistic expectations of what you can achieve. Also, that you focus on the areas of diabetes management that you can control. Things like the doing glucose monitoring rather than the number. Be kind to yourself and ask what you would say to someone else who was feeling the same way that you do. Reach out to friends, whānau, and your diabetes team for support. Check with your diabetes team about local diabetes supports that are available.

### Anxiety and Depression

The physical signs of depression and anxiety can be the same as that of hyperglycaemia (high glucose levels) and hypoglycaemia (low glucose levels). It is important to look at behavioural and thinking aspects of your wellbeing. Have you noticed:

- Changes to your sleeping and eating
- Not wanting to do activities that you used to enjoy
- Feeling hopeless about the future
- Worrying so much it stops you from doing things

If so, talk to your diabetes team. They can help you find the right support in your area.

### Fear of Hypoglycaemia (Hypos)

This can be a big concern for people with diabetes, as it is reality-based. Hypoglycaemia (hypos) can also 'look and feel like' anxiety symptoms. Similar signs are racing heart, sweating, temperature changes, and unclear thinking.

Always assume it is a 'hypo' to start. If it is not, consider whether what you are feeling is anxiety and use some anxiety management strategies like breathing and relaxation. Also, talk to your diabetes team who will be able to help.

### Eating Disorders

Eating disorders are common in people with diabetes. Diabetes management tasks can make someone focus more on their body and kai. Reducing food intake, increasing exercise, and missing insulin doses, might be a way for young people with diabetes to manage their weight. Missing insulin doses can lead to serious health issues and make you feel unwell.

If you are worried about your weight or body image, or if you think this is affecting your diabetes, your team are here to help you. Your family doctor can also help to work out if you should see specialist services.