

# 7 Steps to Optimize Your Diabetes Health

Each of us can improve our lives by taking one or more of these steps. See how you can optimize your diabetes health today!



- **Between appointments, keep a running list of questions to ask your diabetes team.**

We often concentrate on the lab results and prescription refills but forget to ask the questions that we have outside the exam room. Do you want to learn more about a new product or treatment regimen? Are you concerned about elevated glucose levels after eating or when you wake up? Do you want to learn more about how to self-manage your diabetes but don't know where to start? Bring that list to your appointment, and make sure you ask and get answers during your valuable time with your healthcare professionals.

- **Request a “professional” Continuous Glucose Monitor (CGM) session from your medical team.**

They can place the device on your body during a visit and then the CGM collects 10 days of glucose data. You don't have to do anything! Together, you'll review the data and can make changes to better manage your diabetes. This may be part of your insurance coverage, so it's good to ask!

- **Participate in a diabetes-related clinical trial.**

Not only does it benefit you (labs, medical appointments, or supplies may be covered, depending on the study), but it may also help the diabetes community and future treatments. [Clinicaltrials.gov](https://clinicaltrials.gov) is the database of all human clinical trials where you can search by location, type of trial, and by medical condition. You can easily start by searching basic information (e.g. “diabetes” or “insulin resistance” or “retinopathy”) and the state where you live. Additional information can be filtered (age, recruiting status) to focus on the studies that may be most helpful. Don't forget to ask your medical team if they are recruiting for clinical trials.

- **Know you are not alone. Find a group – local or online – where you can share with diabetes peers.**

Diabetes may be a “self-managed” condition, but it certainly does not have to be a lonely one. Other people may have experiences or answers to questions about living with diabetes that your medical team may be unable to answer. Connecting and sharing ideas on how to stay healthy is a wonderful way to build a support group for yourself; we all need it!

- **Subscribe to a newsletter or magazine that will give you up-to-date and accurate information about research and treatments.**

Don't rely only on mainstream news or commercials to learn about new medications or devices. Does your local hospital or clinic have a newsletter specifically for diabetes? Some diabetes organizations, including DiabetesSisters, send out newsletters filled with important information we can all use.

- **Ask “What can I do in-between my appointments with you that will make the greatest difference in my diabetes health?”**

to your medical professional at the beginning of every appointment. This can change the entire conversation from a simple lab review to one where you decide together what little steps you can take to make your life with diabetes better. Setting goals or trying something new can bring renewed energy to your daily diabetes management.

- **Speak up for yourself (and others) when it comes to diabetes.**

Over 37 million people in the United States live with diabetes, yet the public still doesn't understand what it's like to live with this disease. We can all do our part to educate others (including our own family) on how we can be healthier, thanks to new treatments and different ways to manage complications.