

Working With Your Diabetes Care Team

Managing diabetes can be complex because it affects your entire body. It is important to have a team of providers and specialists who can create a personalized care plan. This plan will improve your diabetes health and delay diabetes-related complications. Use the table below to track health care appointments. The recommended minimum time between appointments are noted, but you may need to see your providers more often based on your individual health needs. Descriptions of the providers can be found on the back.

	Team Member	Frequency	Next Scheduled
For Diabetes Management	Primary Care Provider		
	Endocrinologist	Every 1 to 6 months	
	Pharmacist		
	Dietitian	At diagnosis and as needed	
	Care Coordinator	As needed	
	Certified Diabetes Care and Education Specialist (CDCES)	At initial diagnosis; annually; with major health changes	
For Specialty Care	Optometrist or Ophthalmologist	Every 12 months	
	Dentist	Every 6 months	
	Podiatrist	Once a year for comprehensive foot exam if not done by primary care; every 3 months if you need nail care	
	Nephrologist	If you have chronic kidney disease and have been referred by your primary care provider, as needed	
	Obesity Management	As needed	
For Support	Psychologist or Psychiatrist	As needed	
	Social Worker	As needed	
	Community Health Worker	As needed	



This resource is part of the AHEAD Initiative Diabetes QI Patient Toolkit. For access to this toolkit and additional resources, please visit NEOQIHub.org.

For Diabetes Management

Primary Care Provider: Your general or family medical provider who gives your routine medical care. They provide preventative visits, order labs and medications.

Endocrinologist: This specialist treats hormone problems, such as diabetes. They make medication changes, order labs and provide education. At times, this can be your primary diabetes provider.

Pharmacist: Besides providing you with medications, pharmacists can help manage your diabetes and provide you with education.

Dietitian: This provider helps you develop a healthy meal plan specific to improving your diabetes and cardiovascular health.

Care Coordinator: A healthcare professional responsible for helping you manage your care by monitoring treatment plans, providing education on your conditions, and connecting you to needed healthcare providers.

Certified Diabetes Care and Education

Specialist (CDCES): This group of trained professionals help develop a comprehensive diabetes management plan specific to your healthcare needs.

For Specialty Care

Optometrist or Ophthalmologist: Over time, diabetes can affect your vision by damaging the vessels of the eyes. This specialist focuses on the health of your eyes and vision.

Dentist: People with diabetes have an increased risk for gum disease. This specialist provides teeth and mouth care.

Podiatrist: Diabetes can harm the nerves and vessels of your legs and feet. This specialist provides foot and leg care.

Nephrologist: Diabetes and hypertension can affect your kidney function. Your primary care provider or endocrinologist will check your kidney function annually. If they find that your kidneys are not working as well as they should be, you will be referred to this specialist.

Obesity Management: Often a decrease in 5% to 7% of your body weight is enough to make a significant improvement in your diabetes and cardiovascular health. This specialist provides additional support in helping you achieve and maintain a healthy weight. This can include assistance in pursuing bariatric surgery (i.e., weight loss surgery).

For Support

Mental Health Provider: Managing diabetes can be difficult and can lead to stress or distress. There are a lot of ups and downs. Psychologists, psychiatrists and social workers all help with managing mental health. If you find that you may need more support with your mental health, speak to your primary care provider and consider asking for a referral to one of these specialists.

Community Health Worker: This healthcare professional provides culturally appropriate support and community resources to improve your diabetes health.

References:

1. U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Your Diabetes Care Team. <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/treatment/diabetes-doctors.html> Published May 15, 2024. Accessed October 2024.
2. American Diabetes Association. Your Health Care Team. <https://diabetes.org/health-wellness/diabetes-and-your-health/your-healthcare-team>. Accessed October 2024.
3. National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases. Managing Diabetes. <https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/diabetes/overview/managing-diabetes#team>. Reviewed October 2024. Accessed October 2024.



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