

Psychological Impact of Diabetes & Hypertension

Hypertension and diabetes are commonly linked with psychological conditions such as depression and anxiety, which can significantly affect overall well-being.

It is important to recognize the signs and consult a primary care physician if you have any of these symptoms

1. Depression may present with:

- Persistent low mood or sadness
- Loss of interest in usual activities
- Feelings of hopelessness, guilt, or worthlessness
- Low energy, fatigue and/or irritability
- Sleep and appetite changes
- Physical discomfort without a clear cause
- Difficulty concentrating or slowed/restless movements
- Suicidal thoughts

2. Anxiety symptoms can include:

- Excessive worry or fear, often about routine matters
- Physical signs like palpitations, sweating, or dizziness
- Muscle tension, shortness of breath, or digestive issues
- Cognitive symptoms like racing thoughts or difficulty concentrating

Both conditions require timely medical attention to support mental and physical health in individuals with chronic conditions.

Psychological support for managing hypertension and diabetes - 1

Psychosocial support is essential in chronic disease management, helping patients and families cope with diagnosis, adhere to treatment, and achieve better health outcomes.

Building a Therapeutic Relationship

- Greet patients warmly, introduce yourself, and create a comfortable environment.
- Use the patient's preferred name and engage in relaxed conversation to ease anxiety.
- Pay attention to nonverbal cues and ask open-ended questions.
- Show empathy and acknowledge their challenges.
- Use motivational interviewing techniques to address non-adherence.

Supporting Patients Who Decline Help or Default on Treatment

- Stay calm and avoid frustration—behavior change is difficult.
- Gently explore reasons for difficulty and listen without judgment.
- Correct misinformation with clear, simple explanations.
- Reassure them that support is always available without guilt-tripping or threats.

Managing Stress in Patients

- Individuals react differently to stress, and healthcare providers should:
- Respectfully introduce themselves and ask about the patient's feelings.
 - Listen to concerns and teach relaxation techniques like deep breathing.
 - Encourage healthy coping strategies while discouraging harmful ones.
 - Use the STOP-THINK-GO method to help patients manage challenges.
 - Link patients with financial difficulties to social support systems.
 - Refer patients with severe distress or self-harm thoughts to mental health professionals.

Supporting Families, Caregivers, and Communities

- Caregivers provide emotional, financial, and treatment support but also face stress. Healthcare providers should:
- Acknowledge their efforts and allow them to express concerns.
 - Educate them on the disease, treatment and lifestyle changes.
 - Provide meal planning, medication reminders, and stress management tips.
 - Encourage self-care, including relaxation techniques and shared responsibilities.
 - Address cultural beliefs affecting treatment adherence.