

# Control Diabetes: Getting Past Denial

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## Taking Charge of Your Diabetes Will Take Time

**“Listen” to your feelings.**

Denial is common when dealing with diabetes. You have heard it a million times, “Diabetes care is up to you.” This is easy to say but hard to do. Staying on track 24 hours a day, seven days a week can tire anyone out. If you find you are in a slump, you might want to check to see if your feelings are getting in the way.

### Denial

Denial is that voice inside that keeps saying, “Not me.” Most people go through denial when they are first told they have diabetes. “I don’t believe it. It must be a mistake,” they say. Saying this to yourself is normal. The trouble comes when you keep trying to deny your diabetes. Long-term denial stops you from learning what you need to know to keep yourself healthy.

### How to Spot Denial

**Denial has a few catch phrases.**

- One bite won’t hurt.
- This sore will heal by itself.
- I’ll go to the doctor later.



- I don’t have time to do it.
- My diabetes isn’t that bad. I only have to take a pill, not shots.

If you hear yourself thinking or saying them, you are not taking care of some part of your diabetes.

### The Dangers of Denial

Denial is bad because it can creep into any part of diabetes self-care. Any denial robs your health care. Not testing. It can be a bother to check your blood sugar each day or more. You may decide you “know” what your blood sugar is by how you feel. But a meter is much better at telling you your blood sugar than feelings are.



**Not sticking with your meal plan.** Changing eating habits and food choices is tough. You may have told yourself:

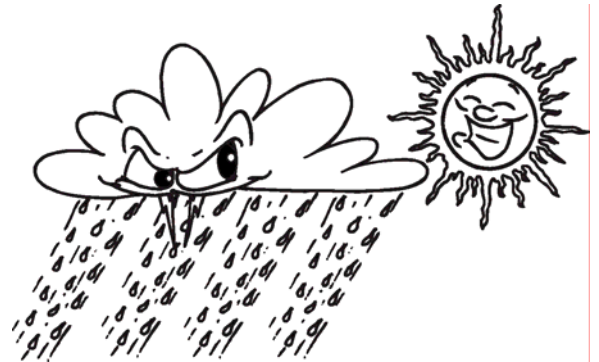
- I can't ask my family to change what they eat. I don't want to eat alone or fix two meals.
- There's no place to buy healthy food where I work.
- Eating right may not be as hard as you think. A dietitian or diabetes teacher can help you.

**Not taking care of your feet.** You know you should check your feet each day, but it takes too much time, or you forget. Washing and checking your feet for signs of trouble daily is needed to avoid injury. This is true no matter what type of diabetes you have.

**Smoking.** You might tell yourself, "I only take a few puffs." You may say smoking keeps you from eating too much. Smoking and diabetes are a deadly duo. People with diabetes who smoke are more likely to get diabetes problems than people with diabetes who do not smoke. Quitting is one of the best things you can do for your health.

## What Can You Do About Denial

Denial is human. It is bound to crop up from time to time. See it and fight back. Write down your diabetes care plan and your health care goals. Know why each item in your plan is needed. Know your reasons for wanting to control your blood sugar. Accept that it will take time to reach your goals. Tell your friends and family how they can help. Let them know that tempting you to go off your plan is not a kindness. Tell them about how you take care of your diabetes. They might want to adopt some of your healthy habits.



### For more information

**Contact a Diabetes Educator** (nurses, dietitians, pharmacists, and other health professionals)

To find a diabetes teacher near you, call:

**The American Association of Diabetes Educators toll-free at 1-800-TEAMUP4 (1-800-832-6874)**  
or visit the website at [www.aadenet.org](http://www.aadenet.org) and click on "Find an Educator."

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