



Psychological & Emotional Aspects of T1D

T1D is correlated with depression, stress, and anxiety for the T1D, their parents and loved ones. Understanding and managing the disease can minimize the emotional burden, and pave the way to a better life

A T1D diagnosis, management, rapid BG changes, chronically elevated BG levels, navigating healthcare, the cost and time burden of T1D all create an emotional burden

T1Ds are up to 3x more likely to have depression than non-T1Ds, yet only ~50% seek treatment. Treatment, therapy, and good management all lead to better outcomes

Changes in blood sugar can cause rapid changes in mood, energy levels, fatigue, trouble thinking clearly, and anxiety.

Stressors:	Remedies:
T1D diagnosis	Confirm the diagnosis through lab results. Learn as much as you can about T1D, the causes, treatments.
T1D time and cost burden	Get efficient with tools, diet, regimen. Find discounts from MFG, utilize OOP and deductibles.
Fear of the unknown and future complications	Make a plan and adjust as needed. Planning reduces anxiety and puts you in control
Feelings of out of control	Having a goal for BG levels, and mapping how to get there, celebrating small victories
Feelings of being overwhelmed by T1D management	Get organized: insurance, Dr, endo, list of meds, carb counting, develop and manage a routine and adjust as needed. Repeat what is working, and change what isn't

Feelings of isolation, like no one understands T1D	Talk with other T1Ds in person or online. Ask their experience, ask what tools they use. Help them and share your experience and guidance when you can
Poor sleep, tiredness throughout day even with good BG levels	Manage caffeine, hydration, diet, stress, exercise. Read and meditate before bedtime. Do yoga to improve circulation
“Bad” BG levels and lab results	Use the tools! CGM, pumps, pens, the right team, glucometer, carb counting, etc.
Frustration of others confusing your T1D with T2D	Educate those that will listen, avoid those that may not
Feeling like there will never be a cure, that the world doesn't care	Be part of a solution. <i>It feels good to help</i>

Impact to the Family

Suggestions for parents, spouses, and partners of T1Ds

- Don't tell the T1D “it could be worse”
- Don't tell them what to do, or how to manage their disease unless they are very young or unable to care for themselves
- You can't change them or cure them, but you can be there when they want to talk or need support
- Use tools like Dexcom “Follow” or other apps to help monitor extreme BG levels

References

[Dr. Mark Heyman, PHD The Diabetes Psychologist](#) (Podcast hosted by PhD and T1D with practical, real life experience managing the emotional and psychological aspects of T1D)

[Diabetes Sangha meditation](#) (meditation practices on YouTube hosted by different T1Ds)

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