

What's the Bottom Line in Diabetes? You guessed it – it is Blood Sugar Control

by Susan J. SMith, Ph.D, CDE

Getting good control of daily blood sugars isn't as easy as it may seem. Blood sugars are affected by medications, dietary input, physical activity, illness, traveling, stress, and day-to-day living.

We are never 100% in control of all these activities at the same time. However, they are part of life that changes minute by minute. People with diabetes are jugglers, needing to try to keep all these aspects of their lives in balance by constantly paying some attention to each of these areas at all times.

We need to be off balance in juggling these aspects of our lives in order to grow, become more effective and find ways to manage our life more positively. Making small adjustments one at a time is a way to make small changes that will affect all areas of your life.

For instance, when there is an illness in the family, additional responsibilities at work or unforeseen health issues, it affects everyone. Our time schedule, eating habits and/or choices, ability to maintain our physical activity, etc are all affected.

Some people thrive in these situations. Others become paralyzed by change and uncertainty.

The disruption of your usual schedule can be difficult, or it can be challenging. We need to look at change as a means to grow as a person and feel accomplished.

Find a way around the obstacle by planning ahead or adjusting your usual schedule to accommodate the change. If we can do a little to balance all these aspects of maintaining diabetes control, we will be able to maintain at least partial control. We may find that the adjustments we make are better than our original schedule. Preparing for meals for the week by having everything ready to add to the meal when it is time to cook can help us maintain good eating habits. Find a park on the way to an appointment and take a short walk.

A reminder of our goals in terms of diabetes:

1. Blood sugars 80-140 mg/dl all the time (or within reach of this range)
2. A1C < 6.5%
3. Blood Pressure < 140/90 mm Hg
4. Cholesterol <200; LDL <100
5. Do some kind of physical activity daily
6. Annual eye exam
7. Annual foot exam
8. Have annual urine test (microalbumin)

Be encouraged to accept change and find a way around it. Be creative to find a way that works for you. Don't lose sight of your goals as a person with diabetes to be in control.

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