

Be A Diabetes Champion!

by Susan J. SMith, Ph.D, CDE

A champion is watched by many as a role model. Those watching may think, "I want to be like that person." Others are watching you and thinking, "I wish he/she didn't do that because the diabetes is going to get worse faster."

You may not even realize how many people see you as a role model in life. It may be your children, grandchildren, parents, other family members or friends and neighbors.

Caring about your diabetes and taking action to keep the diabetes in good control is an important part of being a role model. It does not mean you have to be perfect all the time, but know what are good choices and keep them in the forefront most of the time.

The only way you know if you are in control of your diabetes is by testing your blood sugar and knowing what those numbers mean. Making appropriate choices to eat healthy, being active and taking medications as prescribed are very important parts of managing diabetes and being a good role model for others.

As a person with diabetes, you have the opportunity to learn so much more about what is good for your body and what is not as desirable, whether it be food, exercise or medication. Blood sugars should, in most people, stay between 80-140 mg/dl all the time. Learning how to interpret your numbers sometimes can take a few educational sessions with a diabetic educator regularly over time with regular follow-ups. Diabetes will progress over time and can negatively impact your health and your day-to-day living in the future. Check in regularly with your health care provider whether you are feeling good or poorly to be sure the diabetes is under control.

Knowing what you know about diabetes, how many people in your life can you influence to take control of their diabetes? How many people are watching you to see how to take better care of their own diabetes? Attend community diabetes events to learn more about diabetes. Participate in the annual Diabetes Walk at Visalia Medical Clinic on Saturday, March 25. Get your daily walk in and attend the vendor booths for additional information. Bring your friends and walk together!

Susan Smith, Ph.D., CDE, is a nationally Certified Diabetes Educator (CDE) and a specialist in the field of diabetes since 1988. Since 2002 she has worked with patients individually through all of the internal medicine and family practice providers at Visalia Medical Clinic.
ssmith@vmchealth.com

