



# Who's on Your Diabetes Health Care Team?

Learning you have diabetes can be overwhelming, but your health care team is here to help. Diabetes is a chronic illness that can affect many parts of your body and mental health or overall feeling of well-being. It is important that you are a part of a team. Your primary care physician will help build your health care team and may refer you to a specialist. You might also get a recommendation to a specialist from someone you know. Your primary care physician and specialists will work together to support you in living your highest level of wellness.

Everyone living with diabetes has a unique health care team. The specialists on your team will depend on several factors, including your current health, the services available in your area, and your insurance.



## Specialists Who May be Part of Your Team

Primary Medical Provider or Primary Care Physician (PCP)	Your primary medical provider performs physical exams, makes referrals for specialists, orders lab tests, and pre-prescriptions for medication.
Nurse or Nurse Practitioner	Nurses in your primary medical providers' office will help your doctors coordinate your care. You may see the nurse before speaking to the doctor. A nurse may also teach you how to use a small glucometer device to monitor your blood sugar or teach you how to use a zone tool to manage your care at home.
Endocrinologist	An endocrinologist specializes in diabetes management. An endocrinologist focuses on the endocrine system, where hormones like insulin are made.
Ophthalmologist	Individuals with diabetes have a higher risk of some eye problems. An ophthalmologist is an eye doctor who will do regular eye exams to monitor your eye health and treat any complications that affect your vision.
Podiatrist	Podiatrists are specifically trained to assess any nerve damage in your feet. A podiatrist will teach you how to check your feet regularly and share ways to keep your feet healthy.
Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN)	A RDN or Registered Dietitian (RD) is an expert in food and nutrition. A nutritionist will help you design a personalized eating plan. You may be referred to a renal dietitian who specializes in kidney care.
Certified Diabetes Care and Education Specialist	This person might be called a diabetes care specialist or a diabetes educator. This person will help you with diabetes self-management strategies and help connect you with community resources.
Dentist	A dentist's specialty is taking care of your oral health. You may also be referred to a Periodontist if you have problems with your gums.
Mental Health Professional	Psychiatrists, psychologists, and clinical social workers are all mental health professionals who can help you cope with the many emotions that can come with learning that you have Diabetes.
Cardiologist	Patients with diabetes have a higher risk of complications such as heart attacks. A Cardiologist is a heart specialist who monitors heart health and who may refer you to a cardiac rehabilitation program for monitored exercise.
Pharmacist	A Pharmacist specializes in medicine management. A Pharmacist will provide information on when and how to take your medications to avoid interactions with food and other medications.
Nephrologist	A Nephrologist specializes in the treatment of acute and chronic kidney diseases. Your doctor may refer you to a Nephrologist to help monitor how well your kidneys are working. A Nephrologist may also help manage hypertension and would manage your care if you needed dialysis.

Source: [Your Health Care Team | ADA \(diabetes.org\)](https://www.diabetes.org/your-health-care-team)

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