

# Coping with diabetes

Finding out you have diabetes can be a big shock. On top of everything else in your life, you have to learn new ways to take care of yourself. Diabetes isn't a disease where all you have to do is take your medication. Your doctor or diabetes educator may tell you that you have to change the way you eat, lose weight, and exercise — all at the same time!



All this can sound stressful. But with a little planning, a little help, and a positive attitude, you can do what you need to do to control your diabetes. Here are some tips:

- ✓ **Start with a little at a time.** Don't look at all the things you "should" do. If you try to do everything all at once, you'll get stressed out. Start by picking a few things to do and go from there.
- ✓ **Keep it real.** Set realistic goals, like losing 5 pounds in a month or walking around the block 3 times a week. Start with small steps so you can build your confidence.
- ✓ **Celebrate!** It's a big deal when you reach a goal, so congratulate yourself! That can help you keep making progress.
- ✓ **Nobody's perfect.** Don't worry or feel bad if you miss a day. The important thing is to keep trying.
- ✓ **Adjust your goals.** If you're having a problem keeping up with your program, tell your diabetes team. Together, you can set goals that work better for you.
- ✓ **Stay positive.** Having diabetes is tough, but you're tougher. Keeping a positive attitude can help you stick with your plan when challenges come up.
- ✓ **It takes a village.** Support from family and friends can help you deal with problems and reach your goals. It's OK to ask for help. You're not alone!