Stress and Diabetes

When you have diabetes, stress can cause your blood glucose levels to change rapidly and unexpectedly.

Stress can affect your body's blood glucose levels in two ways.
- It changes the way your body handles insulin.
- It can cause you to change the way you take care of yourself.

Stress can be mental or physical. Each type of stress causes a similar chemical reaction in your body. For some people with diabetes, exercising can offer enough stress release that they do not need to take other steps. But other people need to try additional ways of managing their stress.

Controlling emotional stress
Many people have difficulty controlling emotional stress, which can be brought on by many situations, such as a fight with a loved one, taking care of an aging parent, worrying about the future, or a difficult job situation.

Develop coping strategies that allow you to control how "stressed out" you get. This can be accomplished in many ways.
- For some people, it helps to put the problem in perspective: Is this problem really that big a deal?
- For others, taking action to fix the problem can reduce stress.
- For still others, removing themselves from the stressful situation is the only way they can reduce it. This may mean transferring positions in a company or changing jobs.

Whatever your preferred method for controlling emotional stress, it may be helpful to seek the advice of professionals. Mental health professionals, including psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, licensed counselors, and social workers, can help you recognize the unhealthy ways that you deal with emotional stress and help you develop more constructive patterns.

Controlling physical stress
You cannot always avoid physical stress. At some point you are likely to be ill or experience some type of injury. In these cases, it is very important to either seek medical attention or monitor your condition closely. You should also take care not to overexert yourself.