

# Stress and Diabetes

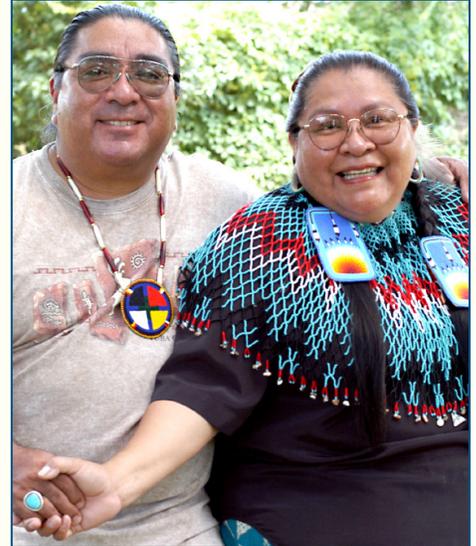
## Managing Stress When You Have Diabetes

Life is stressful at times. Having diabetes can also add stress, along with worries about work, family, or school. When stressed, your blood sugars can increase and be harder to control.

Learning how to deal with stress can lead to a more balanced life. It is a way of caring for yourself and managing diabetes.

**“W**hen I first found out I had diabetes, I was devastated. I kept having a helpless thought. I decided to choose to find reasons and ways to be joyful every day. I worked at it and prayed for it. I got help from the Creator, family, and friends.”

—Barbara Mora, Paiute/Dine



Barbara Mora and husband, Bob.

## Stress and Everyday Life

Stress can be felt in emotional and physical ways. Emotions could show as anxiety, frustration or anger. Your body could experience rapid breathing, tense muscles, headaches or stomach pain.

Stress can be temporary or last a long time. Ongoing stress is often harder to deal with and can affect work, relationships, and health. With help, stress can be reduced.



## Unhealthy Responses to Stress

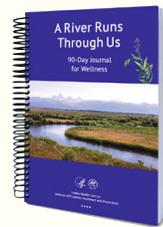
- ❖ Using commercial tobacco more than usual
- ❖ Overeating
- ❖ Increased alcohol use
- ❖ Spending hours watching TV or social media
- ❖ Avoiding friends and relatives

At first, these ways of coping might feel like they help, but over time may become harmful to your physical and mental health.



# Healthy Ways to Manage Stress

Finding ways to cope with stress is good for your mind and body. Reducing stress can also help with blood sugar and diabetes control. Talking with your care provider can help if you often feel overwhelmed or depressed. Consider writing about your feelings in, *A River Runs Through Us, 90-Day Journal for Wellness*.



To order your free copy visit, [www.ihs.gov/diabetes/education-materials-and-resources/](http://www.ihs.gov/diabetes/education-materials-and-resources/)



Do things that bring joy. Listen to music, dance, or read.

Start your day with prayer, meditation, or traditional practices.

Gather berries, herbs, or traditional medicines.

Volunteer at a cultural center, church, or elder program.

Move more. Pick an activity you enjoy, such as walking or sports.

Talk with a friend, family member, or traditional adviser.

Express your creativity with arts and crafts, beading, or woodwork.

Practice relaxation breathing to slow your heart rate and calm you.



Try to get at least 7 hours of sleep daily.

Learn to say, "No," to help balance your commitments.

