

Responding to patient concerns

Each statement on the left is a hypothetical example of what you may hear from your patients about incorporating digital health into their diabetes management plan. To the right of each concern, see our suggestion for how to respond to help patients overcome potential barriers to adoption.

Hesitation about change or the unfamiliar

I'm fine with what I've always done.



Validate how they feel, then dig deeper. Ask if they can remember a time when they weren't satisfied with their current routine.

New technology is mostly just flash and not necessary. I'd rather stay with what's tried and true.



Ask if there's any technology they're using that has been useful to them (eg, smartphone).

I don't want to have to learn a whole new system.



Let them know that many digital tool manufacturers offer educational training and may provide financial support.

Concern about additional burden or busy schedule

I don't want a device I have to think about all the time—I just want it to work for me.



Ask them what a satisfactory device experience would look like to them.

I don't have time to add another thing to my routine.



Ask them to explain why they like the status quo. It may help them see that it has room for improvement. What's working now? What might change with the digital tool in question?

I don't want to wear a device or get reminder alarms all the time. It's embarrassing.



Help them problem-solve to see if there's a less obtrusive solution that might work for them (eg, discreet wearables, silent reminders).

Skepticism that digital health is feasible for them

I can't afford some new high-tech device.



Offer to help them with a benefits verification letter and/or research a savings offer from the device manufacturer.

The patient I care for won't be able to use this device.



Involve the child or adult patient in the demonstration of the device, along with the caregiver, walking everyone through it together.

I like to run and swim, and I can't do that while wearing a device.



Ease the patient's concerns by providing information about waterproof devices that may work for them.

Five questions to help focus on individual needs

As you're talking with patients about diabetes tech, try to answer these questions:



Why might your patient be struggling with aspects of their diabetes management?



What small, helpful changes do they believe they could make?



Do they understand, and are they aligned with, their care plan?



What could motivate them to stick with their care plan and make more self-management decisions for themselves?



What would their full engagement look like? How can you encourage it?

Make the most of the conversation

Engage with your patients as a collaborator and ally to help them understand their challenges. With your support, patients can build and sustain their diabetes digital health skills.

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