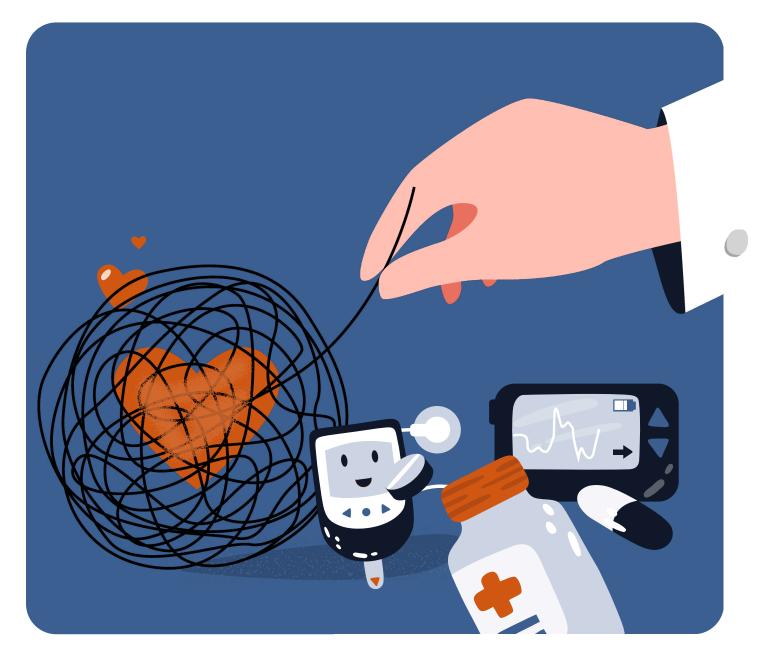
Diabetes Stigma



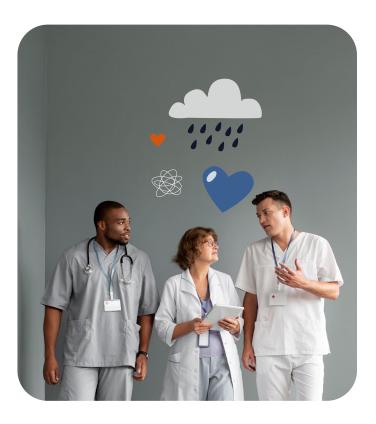
A Resource for Healthcare Heroes

Tackling diabetes stigma with care and compassion

dStigmatize

What is Diabetes Stigma?

Diabetes stigma refers to negative social judgments, stereotypes, and prejudices about diabetes, or about a person due to their diabetes.¹ Diabetes stigma becomes discrimination when it is used in unfair or prejudicial treatment towards a person with diabetes.¹



4 in 5 people with diabetes report experiencing diabetes stigma

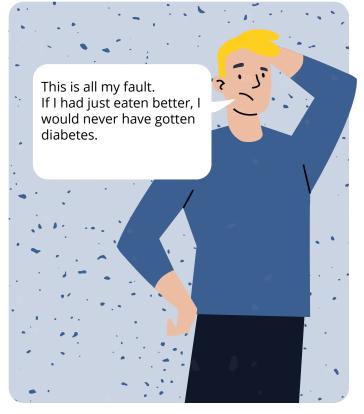
Why does diabetes stigma exist?

Most health-related stigma, including diabetes stigma, is caused by shame, blame, fear, and disgust that arises from negative stereotypes and misinformation.¹⁻³

These stereotypes and misinformation are often amplified by media messaging and public discourse, health organizations and health professionals, cultural and social norms, policy, and law.

What does diabetes stigma look like?

Internalized stigma



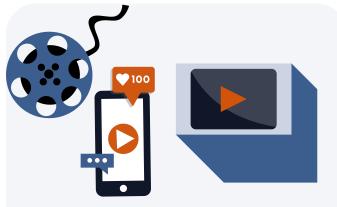
Interactions with others



In healthcare



In the media and pop culture



"[I] convinced a lot of very large customers who should not be eating cheesecake to have more cheesecake...One of those chubsters even had an insulin pump."

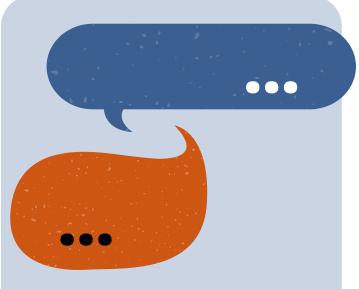
- The Big Bang Theory, Season 8, Episode 1

In education and employment



In the diabetes community

It wasn't my fault that I got type 1 diabetes and I hate that we're lumped in with those lazy people who bring their type 2 diabetes on themselves. In our language



Tom is a **diabetic** and he **failed** to adhere to his treatment plan. He is **non-compliant** and **difficult**.



What is the impact of diabetes stigma?

Psychological well-being

Diabetes stigma is associated with:

- Increased depressive and anxiety symptoms,⁴
- Increased diabetes distress,⁴
- Decreased quality of life,⁵
- Decreased self-esteem,⁴ selfefficacy,⁶ and resilience.⁷

Social well-being

Diabetes stigma is associated with:

- Social withdrawal or isolation,⁸
- Worse interpersonal relationships with family, friends, and health professionals,^{6,8,9}
- Concealing diabetes from others.¹⁰

Physical well-being and self-care

Diabetes stigma is associated with:

- Higher HbA1c,¹¹
- Higher BMI,¹²
- More frequent severe hypoglycemia,¹¹ diabetes-related ketoacidosis (DKA),¹¹ retinopathy,¹¹ hospitalizations,¹³
- Avoiding diabetes self-care behaviors including monitoring glucose levels, delivering insulin, and taking diabetes medications,¹⁰
- Avoiding healthcare appointments and screenings (for diabetes or diabetes-related complications).¹⁴



Citations:

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dStigmatize

Ignorance perpetuates diabetes stigma.

The first step to address diabetes stigma is to understand what it is and how it affects people. Visit the **dStigmatize Resource Library** to learn more.



dstigmatize.org/resources









This resource was created for dStigmatize, a diaTribe Foundation program, with support from Lilly Diabetes, and the Boehringer Ingelheim-Lilly Alliance.

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