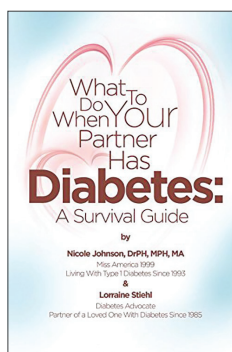


# What to Do When Your Partner Has Diabetes: A Survival Guide

Reviewed by Renza Scibilia



## What to Do When Your Partner Has Diabetes: A Survival Guide

BY NICOLE JOHNSON AND LORRAINE STIEHL

Publisher: CreateSpace Independent

Publishing Platform

Publication date: 28 July 2017

Cost: **\$10.00**

People with diabetes often rely on the love and support of their family to help them with the daily grind of managing the disease. For partners of people with diabetes, there is a delicate balance between providing support and encouragement and dealing with any concerns and frustrations they may feel.

*What to Do When Your Partner Has Diabetes: A Survival Guide* was written to explain and work through many of the issues faced by couples when one partner has diabetes.

Authored by the impressive duo of Nicole Johnson, DrPH, MPH, MA, who has lived with type 1 diabetes for 25 years and who won the Miss America crown in 1999, and Lorraine Stiehl, the partner of someone with diabetes for more than 30 years, the book provides practical advice and strategies for how couples can live happily alongside each other—and diabetes.

Although much has been written about the burden faced by individuals

with diabetes, their partners are often forgotten. This book acknowledges the challenges, worries, and fears faced by partners and addresses how to deal with them.

Living with diabetes affects almost every aspect of life. The authors include a variety of topics, including food and alcohol, blood glucose management, diabetes-related complications, exercise, medications, hypoglycemia, and travel, and then provide detailed suggestions for how partners may be able to help in each situation.

It is pleasing to see difficult, sometimes taboo topics such as mental health, sex, and intimacy discussed frankly and openly, with helpful ideas for how to approach conversations about these issues.

Johnson and Stiehl also offer an overview of the scientific literature regarding partner support for people with diabetes. Open communication, which means allowing people with diabetes to determine the ways they

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<https://doi.org/10.2337/cd18-0042>

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can best be supported, is essential. Scattered throughout the book are quotes from real-life partners of people with diabetes. Just as everyone's diabetes is different, all relationships are different. But the authors emphasize that open communication is

essential for finding appropriate and comfortable ways to deal with diabetes together.

This book is required reading for anyone who lives with—and loves—someone with diabetes. The partners who have diabetes should read it, too,

to gain perspective on how their loved one may feel.

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**Duality of Interest**

No potential conflicts of interest relevant to this article were reported.