

## **How to Approach Someone You Suspect May Be Struggling with ED-DMT1**

Have you recently recognized some of the [common warning signs of ED-DMT1](#) (dual diagnosis of type 1 diabetes and an eating disorder) in a loved one? Are you unsure of how to approach your loved one with your observations and concerns? We understand that this may be a very difficult and scary time for you. This is not an easy conversation to instigate, especially with someone you love. However, you're doing the right thing by seeking out advice on how to approach your loved one.

Friends and family are often key to encouraging their T1D loved ones to seek help for their eating disorder. Whether they are afraid or ashamed to seek help, or ambivalent about giving up their disordered behaviors, many ED-DMT1 sufferers find it difficult to ask for support. Family and friends can play an important role in identifying worrying symptoms to the sufferer and encouraging them to seek help.

Here are some important tips to keep in mind before you decide to approach your loved one with your concerns:

### **Plan a time to talk.**

Set aside a time for a private, respectful meeting with your loved one to discuss your concerns openly and honestly in a caring, supportive way. Make sure you both will be free from distractions.

### **Communicate your concerns.**

Share your memories of specific times when you felt concerned about your loved one's behaviors. Explain that you think these things may indicate a problem that needs professional attention.

### **Use "I" statements.**

Avoid placing shame, blame, or guilt on your loved one regarding their actions or attitudes. Focus on using "I" statements. For example: "I'm concerned about you." Try to avoid using "you" statements, such as, "You just need to take your insulin."

### **Avoid ultimatums.**

Although you want your loved one to get help, he or she cannot be forced to do so.

### **Be prepared for negative reactions.**

Some ED-DMT1 sufferers are glad someone has noticed they are struggling. Others respond differently. Some may become angry and hostile, insisting you are the one with the problem. Others may brush off your concerns or minimize potential dangers. Both of these responses are normal.

### **It's okay if they're not ready to accept help yet.**

If your loved one refuses to acknowledge that there is a problem, restate your feelings and the reasons for them, and leave yourself open and available as a supportive listener.

*For support and more information, please contact us at [info@wearediabetes.org](mailto:info@wearediabetes.org).*