



Tips for Supporting Colleagues with Diabetes

You have the ability to make work a better place for people living with diabetes.



Use Empowering Language

Inclusive, respectful language helps create environments where people feel seen, supported and safe in the workplace.



"Living with diabetes"

instead of

"Suffering from diabetes"



"Managing diabetes"

instead of

"Controlling diabetes"



"Person with diabetes"

instead of

"Diabetic"



Respect Autonomy and Privacy

Let the person lead the conversation but ask open-ended questions, like:

- "Would you like me to be aware of anything to support you at work?"
- "Is there anything you'd like me to know?"
- "Is there anything you'd like me to share (or not share) with the team?"



Normalize Diabetes in Everyday Conversation

Don't treat diabetes as a taboo topic, speak about it naturally and often. Say phrases like:

- "Let me know if you need a break or time to manage your diabetes."
- "Thanks for letting me know—I appreciate your openness."
- "I'm here if you ever want to talk or need support."



Challenge Stereotypes

Speak up when you hear misinformation or language that reinforces stigma.

- **If someone says:**
"People with diabetes shouldn't travel/work late/do that job,"
- **You could say:**
"Diabetes doesn't limit someone's potential—they may need different support."



Avoid Judgmental or Invasive Comments

Don't ask prying questions or use language that implies shame or judgement like:

- "Should you be eating that?"
- "You don't look diabetic."
- "Is it the bad kind?"



More ways to support colleagues with diabetes

- Respect privacy and never disclose someone's condition without consent
- Support flexible schedules and break times for diabetes management
- Include diabetes in DEI and wellness initiatives
- Acknowledge the emotional toll and offer compassion
- Speak up against bias and advocate for inclusive policies
- Be a consistent ally in meetings, culture, and policy