

Module III-9

Diabetes and sexual health

Overview

Sexual health is a core part of a person's general well-being. Diabetes can affect aspects of human sexuality. Sexual health should be an integral part of the care of people with diabetes, and should address the physical, psychological, social and personal aspects of sexuality in a culturally sensitive and relevant way.

Sexual health should include preventive strategies as well as the management of specific sexual problems, recognizing that sexual dysfunction is multifactorial and can occur as a result of poor glycaemic control or can be unrelated to diabetes. A person's sexuality is a highly sensitive issue and sexual health assessments must be approached with due consideration to their privacy and confidentiality.

Issues related to sexual health should be incorporated into the overall assessment of a person with diabetes.

Goals

- To discuss the human sexual response and the effects that diabetes can have on the physical, psychological and social well-being and relationships of an individual
- To discuss body image concepts and how diabetes can impact on a person's sexual identity

Objectives

After completing this module the participant will be able to:

- Describe human sexual responses
- Describe the effects of fluctuations in blood glucose levels on sexual responsiveness in men and women
- Discuss the individual, interpersonal and disease factors that can impact on a person's sexual health
- Describe how the daily demands of living with diabetes may increase stress and fatigue thereby impacting on desire, especially in women
- Take a basic sexual history, respecting a person's culture and right to privacy and confidentiality
- Discuss appropriate preventive strategies for sexual health – practice safe sex, pap smears

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know that age and the stage of a person's life and duration of diabetes can affect sexual health, sexual identity and the sexual activity he or she engages in • Know that there is a wide range of 'normal' sexual activity • Describe the management of common diabetes-related sexual problems, such as erectile dysfunction, monilia, balanitis
Teaching strategies	Case presentations, short lecture
Suggested time	1-2 hours
Who should teach this module	Sexual health counsellor, diabetes educator
Evaluation of learning	Evaluation of a case history that has sexual health as a focus
References	<p>Dunning P. Sexuality and women with diabetes. <i>Patient Educ Couns</i> 1993; 21: 5-12.</p> <p>Guay AT. Treatment of erectile dysfunction in men with diabetes. <i>Diabetes Spectrum</i> 1998; 11: 101-9.</p> <p>International Diabetes Federation Consultative Section on Diabetes Education. <i>IDF Position Statements on Diabetes Education</i>. IDF. Brussels, 2001.</p> <p>International Diabetes Federation Consultative Section on Diabetes Education. <i>International consensus position statements for diabetes education, diabetes and sexual health</i>. Class Publishing. London, 2000.</p> <p>Ross M, Channon-Little L. <i>Discussing Sexuality: A guide for the health practitioner</i>. MacLennan and Petty. Sydney, 1991.</p>