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DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY IN PATIENTS WITH DIABETES MELLITUS: A
CONCEPTUAL DISCUSSION OF TREATMENT ADHERENCE ISSUES AND CURRENT
TREATMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

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A growing body of literature suggests that depression and subclinical diabetes-related distress are common in patients with type 1 and 2 diabetes. Likewise, anxiety disorders are more prevalent in patients with diabetes compared to the normal adult population. Importantly, both depression and anxiety have been associated with non-adherence to the diabetes self-care regimen, thus increasing the risk for hyperglycemia and other serious diabetes-related complications.

This presentation will discuss the recent literature on the association between depression, anxiety, and reduced treatment adherence, including evidence for plausible biological and behavioral mechanisms. We will then examine current treatment recommendations for both diabetes specialist and generalist healthcare providers. Recommended screening and assessment measures will be reviewed, as well as individual and group stress management and other cognitive-behavioral interventions. The suitability and adaptability of general cognitive-behavioral and stress management approaches will be discussed, including suggestions for tailoring them to patients with diabetes and specific diabetes components. In general, through this evidence-based discussion, we hope to increase awareness of and sensitivity toward these important issues in the general medical and psychological communities. Further, we hope to encourage dialogue between providers and patients regarding stress in managing diabetes, and make prevention and screening for co-morbid psychological illnesses a focus in routine clinic visits.