

4 Essential Questions You Should Be Asking Your New Health Coach



By Tom Milam, [TrueLifeCare](#)

One of the newer and more effective trends in diabetes management is the use of health coaches, who are certified professionals that provide a one-on-one support system for individuals managing the daily complexities associated with having diabetes.

A conversation with these professionals might seem intimidating to you. Introducing another person into your healthcare journey could feel uncomfortable for a variety of reasons. However, developing a relationship with these trained and skilled professionals can empower you with the knowledge, confidence, and encouragement to help you reach your personal and health-related goals.

Below are four essential questions I would recommend you ask your health coach. These questions can help to make sure the next phase of your diabetes management journey gets off on the right foot.

1. What can I expect?

This is the most basic and perhaps the most important question. What are we going to talk about? How will you be helping me? It is only natural to “wonder” about the health coaching process during your first conversations. Fortunately, certified health coaches have trained for and developed the skills to help guide the conversation and make you feel comfortable.

Typical ice-breaker questions from your coach could include:

- If you’ve been recently diagnosed, how are you planning to manage your diabetes?
- How did you feel the day you were diagnosed?
- Would you share with me what you think contributed to the development of your diabetes?
- How has your diabetes changed you?

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2. How's this going to be different than working with my doctor?

Unlike your doctor, your health coach will not prescribe medications, diagnose an illness, or otherwise practice medicine. What he or she can do, however, is engage with you to better understand your diabetes and how it affects you, and to help you with your internal motivation for lifelong better health choices.

You see your doctor every few months, but you'll be in contact with your coach on a more regular basis. They take the time to really get to know you so that suggestions are personalized just for you. You can ask your coach to elaborate on their experiences with other people like you. With a better sense of how the process works, you'll find that you've become even better prepared for future visits and conversations with your doctor!

3. Where do I start?

Every journey begins with one step, and continues one step at a time. Certified health coaches are trained to meet you where you are now with your diabetes management. If you're feeling overwhelmed or confused in any way, do be open and honest with your health coach. Working as a team, you will discover a realistic starting place from which you can successfully work toward accomplishing your goals. Are you concerned about consistency in your glucose readings? Have you been trying to lose weight without success? Your health coach will walk you through setting goals and provide the personal support to help you accomplish them.

4. Why is this important?

Ask your health coach to help you see and understand the value. According to the American Academy of Family Physicians, 80% of participants agreed that engaging in health coaching over the phone helped them to understand how to better manage their diabetes. Give your health coach a chance to explain how and why they think the relationship will benefit you as you manage your medications, work on lifestyle changes, and monitor things like glucose levels, your A1c target, and more.

Developing a personal relationship with a skilled health coach may seem challenging to you at first, but I think you will be surprised how easy and comfortable it is once you get started.

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