

## Diabetes and stress survey

### Thanks for adding your voice to diabetes research.

Last month, nearly 600 of you completed the diabetes and stress survey. That's the largest number of responses we've ever had for a diabetes survey on PatientsLikeMe. Managing diabetes on a daily basis can sometimes cause stress in your life, so identifying what those diabetes-related stressors are is an important part of your care plan.

As part of this survey, you have entered your responses to the 17-item Diabetes Distress Scale (DDS). This scale measures the amount and types of problems diabetes can cause in your life. More information on the scale and how you can score your own level of diabetes-related distress can be found [here](#).

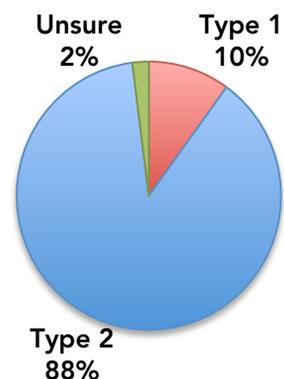
Here's what we discovered...

### What was the most frequently reported diabetes type?

The majority (88%) of you reported living with Type 2 diabetes, and about 10% had type 1.

"I believe it's important to understand the physical, behavioral and emotional sides of illness. Diabetes, in particular, is so highly dependent on what people do every day. It is, therefore, almost all about behavior— how do you talk yourself into taking on new tasks and making changes in your lifestyle, some of them which may seem not so pleasant or worthwhile, that you'd rather not do. "

Dr. William Polonsky, Founder and President of the Behavioral Diabetes Institute, and the co-creator of the Diabetes Distress Scale (DDS)



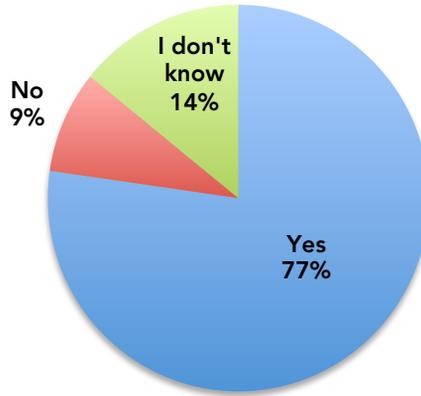
## How does diabetes affect you?

Very few of you experienced problems regarding your doctor's management of your diabetes, but a larger percentage experienced somewhat serious problems in feeling that you were failing with your daily diabetes regimen or sticking closely enough to a good meal plan. Many of you also said that diabetes was taking up a lot of your physical/mental energy and causing you to feel overwhelmed by the demands of living with diabetes.

	Not a problem	A slight problem	A moderate problem	A somewhat serious problem	A serious problem	A very serious problem
Diabetes is taking up too much of my physical/mental energy everyday.	22%	26%	25%	14%	8%	4%
I will end up with long-term complications, no matter what I do.	18%	21%	22%	15%	13%	11%
Feeling overwhelmed by demands of living with diabetes.	29%	28%	16%	12%	8%	7%
My doctor doesn't know enough about diabetes and diabetes care.	61%	15%	11%	7%	3%	2%
My doctor doesn't give me clear enough directions on how to manage my diabetes.	57%	18%	12%	7%	3%	3%
I am not testing my blood sugars frequently enough.	44%	19%	15%	8%	7%	6%
I am often failing with my diabetes regimen.	22%	30%	19%	15%	8%	6%
I am not sticking closely enough to a good meal plan.	18%	28%	20%	15%	11%	8%
Friends or family don't appreciate how difficult living with diabetes can be.	31%	24%	19%	11%	8%	6%
Friends or family don't give me the emotional support that I would like.	44%	23%	14%	8%	5%	6%

## Have you had an A1C test done in the past year?

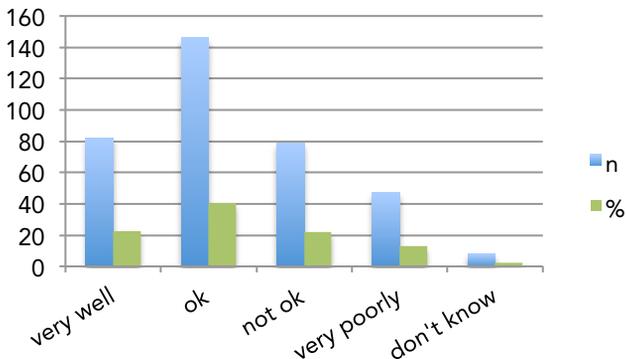
Most patients (77%) reported having an A1C test done within the past year. Monitoring A1C levels are important for blood glucose control, and A1C should be checked between 2 - 4 times a year, depending on the type of diabetes you have. More than half (59%) of A1C test results were between 6 and 8.



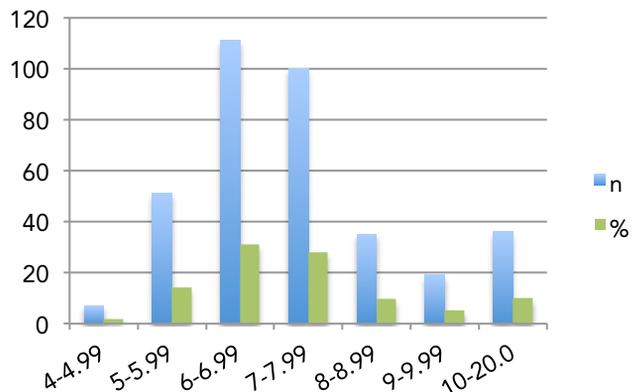
## A1C Test Results

Most of you reported that you thought your last test result meant you were doing very well (23%), okay (40%) or not okay (22%). A few of you reported doing very poorly (13%) or not knowing what your number meant (2%). According to the American Diabetes Association (ADA) and other agency guidelines, healthy A1C levels are generally 7% or less.

What do you think your last test result means?

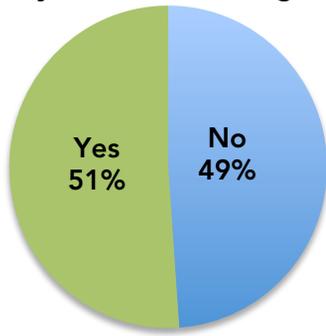


A1C test results

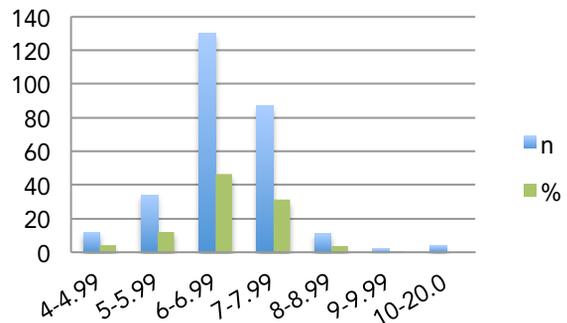


## Do you and your doctor have a specific A1C goal, and if so, what is it?

Do you have an A1C goal?



A1C goals



About half of you reported you had an A1C goal with your doctor and the most common target A1C range was between 6% and 6.99% (among 46% of individuals who reported having an A1C goal).

Finally, we found that those with better A1C numbers (less than 7%) reported having less overall diabetes-related stress compared to those with higher A1C numbers (7% or greater). This indicates that knowing your A1C number and having better control of your diabetes is associated with lower diabetes-related distress levels. Visiting your doctor and understanding your A1C number are actions you can take to help you better manage the stress of living with diabetes.