

Quality Report Card

Licking Memorial Health Systems



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DIABETES CARE

Diabetes Self-management Education and Support

Diabetes is the eighth leading cause of death in the United States, and people with diagnosed diabetes have a 50 percent higher risk of early death than those without the disease. People with diabetes are at higher risk for severe health complications, such as blindness, kidney failure, heart disease, stroke, and lower-limb amputations. Receiving a diabetes diagnosis can be scary, and for some, learning how to understand and manage their disease can be overwhelming.

Improved health management can help people with diabetes live longer and healthier lives, and services exist to help individuals and their healthcare teams prevent or delay diabetes complications. One evidence-based diabetes management tool is diabetes self-management education and support (DSMES). DSMES is a program that helps people gain the knowledge and skills they need to manage their diabetes and related conditions.

Individuals who participate in DSMES classes experience positive impacts in their lifestyle, such as changes in eating patterns and activity levels, improved hemoglobin A1C levels, the prevention or delay of diabetes complications, and improved quality of life. Studies also confirm that there are reduced hospital admissions and readmissions due to participation in DSMES classes, making the program a cost-effective tool for patients and healthcare facilities.

There are four times when a person who is diagnosed with diabetes should request a referral to a diabetes education program:

- When first diagnosed
- At an annual exam
- When it becomes more difficult for a person to manage their diabetes, such as emotional factors, new health issues, new medication, or changes in access to food or money
- During life changes, such as divorce or death of a loved one, or acquiring new insurance coverage

DSMES classes are led by certified diabetes educators, dietitians, pharmacists, and registered nurses. They possess comprehensive knowledge of and experience in diabetes prevention, care, and management. The specialists educate, support, and advocate for people with diabetes while promoting self-management to achieve individualized behavioral and treatment goals that reduce risks and optimize health outcomes.

Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) offers DSMES classes through a physician referral for patients with diabetes. The classes are a series of two, 3-hour sessions. Participants may choose to attend classes on the first and second Wednesday of each month, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon, at the Gerald K. McClain Building, located at 20 West Locust Street in Downtown Newark, or on the third and fourth Wednesday

of each month at the Licking Memorial Diabetes Learning Center, located at 1865 Tamarack Road in Newark, from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. Information on programming and course fees can be found by calling (220) 564-4915.

Additional diabetes education and ongoing management is provided by the LMH Medication Therapy Clinic through specifically trained clinical pharmacists, nurses, dietitians, and medical assistants. To help reach personal goals, patients are educated on properly checking blood sugars levels, how to administer and manage medications, and are encouraged through healthy lifestyle and dietary changes. Patients interested in using technology, such as continuous glucose monitors or insulin pumps, are guided through the setup process and provided with ongoing support to achieve lasting, positive results. A physician referral is required, and patients can expect to have routine visits every 2 to 8 weeks depending on individual needs and goals.



Measurably Different ... for Your Health!

Patient Story – Dawn McPeek-Bowser



Dawn McPeek-Bowser, a longtime resident of Licking County, enjoys spending time with her seven grandchildren and is excited to welcome number eight at the beginning of 2024. In 2021, she began to worry that she would have to miss out on some activities with her family because she was feeling sluggish. She first believed her lack of energy was a natural part of the aging process. However, Dawn also noticed that she was thirsty all the time and experiencing problems with her vision. In September 2021, she decided to make an appointment with her primary care physician, Marita L. Moore, M.D., to discuss the symptoms and determine if an underlying cause existed. Dr. Moore ordered blood tests including an examination of Dawn's blood sugar level to ascertain whether or not she might have diabetes.

"My family has no history of diabetes, and at the time, I was unaware of anyone close to me who had ever been diagnosed with the disease except my father-in-law," Dawn said. "I was very emotional about the results because I thought my life was going to change drastically for the worse. I was frightened by the changes I knew I would have to make."

After receiving the diagnosis, Dr. Moore referred Dawn to Licking Memorial Hospital's diabetes self-management education and support (DSMES) presented by Licking Memorial Community Case Management. The classes are recognized by the American Diabetes Association and are instructed by registered nurses, dietitians, and pharmacists to educate patients on how to care for themselves on a daily basis. Participants receive vital information on healthy eating habits, medication management, blood

glucose monitoring, the importance of activity, and reducing risks of diabetes complications.

"The entire experience was eye-opening. I learned so much about diabetes and how to manage the disease. When I was first diagnosed, I had no idea what I could consume to avoid symptoms, and thought I would have to be on a very restrictive diet for the rest of my life," Dawn shared. "I actually started to tear up when they explained healthy eating habits are more about moderation than limiting certain foods. I realized then that I would not have to deprive myself, and that I would be able to move forward with a few minor changes and live normally."

As part of the healthy eating habits education, the dietitians strongly suggest the use of smaller plates and cups during meals and snacks. In addition to creating more appropriate portion sizes of food, the smaller plate is believed to create an optical illusion that assists in feeling more satisfied with the amount of food consumed. If a small piece of food is placed on a large plate, the mind imagines that the portion is not enough to satisfy hunger and causes a feeling of food deprivation. Instinctively, people will add more food to a large plate to achieve the feeling of fullness. However, placing the same amount of food on a small plate allows the mind to accept that the portion is large enough to fulfill the hunger cues. In this manner, fewer calories and carbohydrates are consumed and the person feels satiated.

"When the dietitians explained how to use the small plates, I thought the idea was ridiculous. I did not believe that type of mind game would be successful," Dawn remarked. "However, I had small cups and plates in the house for the grandchildren, and I attempted the small plate method. I found it works and assists in easily tracking the proper amount of carbohydrates and sugars that I consume. I have continued using the small plates and cups, and I am happy to enjoy my favorite snacks. I can even enjoy a night out at a restaurant and make healthy choices to maintain my blood sugar levels."

Since taking the class and learning more about healthy eating habits, Dawn has lost over 70 pounds. She was able to work with Dr. Moore to decrease her diabetes medication dosage as she began to lower her blood sugar levels through diet. In addition, Dawn noticed that the problems with her vision have also been resolved. Finding ways to incorporate more movement and exercise into her daily routine has been a challenge for Dawn. While working at a daycare years ago, she injured her back and struggles with the pain of the injury. However, Dawn has experienced more energy and has set a goal to increase the number of walks that she takes throughout her day. The increased energy has also allowed her to spend more time playing with her grandchildren.

As she shared her diagnosis with others, Dawn found that many of her friends and acquaintances have also been diagnosed with diabetes. She highly recommends the diabetes education classes to them no matter how long it has been since they were diagnosed with the disease. "I cannot say enough about the benefits of the education I received at LMHS," Dawn said. "I know now that a diagnosis of diabetes is not the end of the world, and that a productive, fun life is still possible. The classes also offer needed support from others with the disease. The other attendees share their stories, questions, and concerns, and I felt better knowing I was not going through the process alone."

Dawn's family rallied around her after her diagnosis and remains supportive of her lifestyle modifications. To encourage Dawn to continue eating healthy, her husband of over 30 years, Richard, has made changes in his diet as well, choosing healthier options and consuming more appropriate portion sizes. Dawn and Richard's daughters, Sadee, Chasidy, and Halie, are very supportive of the healthy lifestyle choices that they have made, and the grandchildren have also been involved in learning about nutrition and healthy eating habits.

Diabetes Care – How do we compare?

At Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS), we take pride in the care we provide. To monitor the quality of that care, we track specific quality measures and compare to benchmark measures. Then, we publish the information so you can draw your own conclusions regarding your healthcare choices.

1. Much of the care that patients with diabetes receive takes place in the outpatient or physician office setting. The physician offices of Licking Memorial Health Professionals (LMHP) measure the most critical indicators for diabetes care.

	LMHP 2020	LMHP 2021	LMHP 2022	National
LMHP patients with diabetes having HbA1C test	91%*	86%*	77%	88% ⁽¹⁾
LMHP patients with diabetes receiving eye exam	63%*	41%*	52%	58% ⁽¹⁾
LMHP patients with diabetes having foot exam	73%*	47%*	71%	80% ⁽²⁾
				LMHP Goal
LMHP patients with diabetes having lipid profile	85%*	84%*	85%	90%
LMHP patients with diabetes having microalbuminuria test	79%*	64%*	70%	85%

2. The hemoglobin A1C (HbA1C) test is a simple lab test that shows the average amount of sugar (also called glucose) that has been in a person's blood over an extended period of time. While having the testing done is important, the test results (or outcomes) indicate how well the physician, in collaboration with the patient, is managing the disease. While the goal for most people with diabetes is 7% or less, anything less than 8% is considered a good degree of control of blood sugar levels.

	LMHP 2020	LMHP 2021	LMHP 2022	National ⁽¹⁾
LMHP patients with diabetes with HbA1C less than or equal to 7%	47%*	43%*	50%	38%
LMHP patients with diabetes with HbA1C less than or equal to 8%	69%*	63%*	71%	59%

3. People with diabetes are at high risk for heart disease. An elevated LDL ("bad") cholesterol test reveals if an individual has unhealthy fat levels, which increase the risk for heart disease – a very serious complication of diabetes. An LDL level of 100 milligrams per deciliter (mg/dL) or less is considered best for heart health.

	LMHP 2020	LMHP 2021	LMHP 2022	National ⁽¹⁾
LMHP patients with diabetes with LDL less than or equal to 100 mg/dL	74%*	71%*	80%	48%

4. The Community Case Management (CCM) program at Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH) provides services to people with diabetes in the community including the Diabetes Self-Management Education & Support program. The American Diabetes Association recommends that a person with diabetes should have an HbA1C blood test at least every six months to monitor glucose levels. LMH staff members work closely with patients and their physicians to ensure that this test is performed as recommended in order to manage each patient's condition better.

	LMH 2020	LMH 2021	LMH 2022	LMH Goal
Diabetes Self-management Education & Support participants who obtained an HbA1C test	100%	100%	100%	Greater than 85%

*Due to COVID-19 restrictions throughout 2020 and 2021, some patients were unable to obtain regular testing or attend in-person appointments.

Data Footnotes:

(1) Average of reported Commercial, Medicare, and Medicaid/HEDIS measures.

(2) National Committee for Quality Assurance – NCQA Diabetic Recognition Program

Check out our Quality Report Cards online at LMHealth.org.



Exercising Safely

Regular exercise is an essential part of managing diabetes and staying healthy. The National Institutes of Health recommends 150 minutes of aerobic exercise each week. It can be difficult to know where to begin, especially if a person is not used to performing physical activity. Individuals may have concerns about overexerting themselves or causing injury to their body. It is important to start out slowly and increase activity gradually. The following tips can help a person to begin an exercise routine and prevent injuries, dehydration, and hypoglycemia while exercising:

- Visit a healthcare provider. Before beginning any new physical activity, individuals should consult their physician to determine their level of health and the safest activities for them.
- Checking blood sugar levels before and after exercise can help a person determine how their body responds to certain physical activities.
- Warm up and cool down properly. A low intensity warm-up for 5 minutes before exercising will help get blood flowing and joints moving. Cool down for 5 minutes after exercising.
- Drink plenty of water before, during, and after activity.
- Be prepared for any episodes of low blood sugar. Individuals should have something available to help raise blood sugar levels, such as hard candy, glucose tablets, or juice.
- Avoid exercising in extremely hot or cold temperatures.
- Wear appropriate shoes and clean socks to protect the feet and reduce stress in joints.
- Carry a cell phone should the need to call for assistance arise.
- Wearing a medical identification bracelet can help identify a person with diabetes in the event of an emergency.
- Individuals should listen to their body when exercising and should stop activity if they become short of breath, dizzy, or lightheaded and report any unusual problems to their physician.



**Licking Memorial
Health Systems**

1320 West Main Street
Newark, Ohio 43055

Visit us at [LMHealth.org](https://www.lmhealth.org).

Please take a few minutes to read this month's report on **Diabetes Care**. You will soon discover why Licking Memorial Health Systems is measurably different ... for your health!

The Quality Report Card is a publication of the LMHS Public Relations Department. Please contact the Public Relations Department at (220) 564-1572 to receive future mailings.

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