



# THE lamp LIGHTER

Methodist Hospitals Nurse Newsletter • Sept. 2023

## Helping Patients Live Well With Diabetes

Methodist Hospitals' Diabetes Center stands as a beacon of comprehensive care and empowerment for those navigating the labyrinth of diabetes. With a curriculum accredited by the American Diabetes Association, the Diabetes Center delves into the depths of knowledge far beyond the basics of diabetes management.

Many patients will first encounter representatives of the Diabetes Center during an inpatient diabetes consultation. Nurses are encouraged to submit their referrals for inpatient diabetes instruction at the earliest possible point during those hospital stays.

"If we get the referral early in the patient's stay, we have time to do follow-ups and talk to family members, if needed," said Carol Sakelaris, RN, BSN, MPA, CDCES, Certified Diabetic Care & Education Specialist and Acute Care Educator. "If we get the referral just before discharge, our instruction winds up being a 15-minute crash course as they're heading out the door."

Carol, registered dietitian Kristina Greene, MS, RDN, LD, CDCES, and Valerie Alger, RN, staff the Diabetes Center.

### Diabetes Self-Management Education Classes

A cornerstone of the services offer by the Methodist Hospitals Diabetes Center are its self-management education classes.

"Our program goes way beyond teaching patients how to give themselves a shot or check their sugar," said Kristina, who is also a Certified Diabetes Educator. "It's very in-depth and very comprehensive. We cover lifestyle changes, and we help patients understand exactly what's going on in their body based on the type of diabetes they have."

The Diabetes Self- Management course begins with a one-hour individual intake assessment followed by three, 3-hour classes led by a Certified Diabetes Educator. Topics include nutrition, the importance of exercise, understanding blood sugar levels, caring for your feet, eyes and skin, and heart and kidney health.



These classes are intended to give patients the tools they need to manage their diabetes and to live as healthy as possible. It's also focused on preventing and lessening the severity of future complications.

"It's much more comprehensive than inpatient instruction," Carol said. "We try to send patients home with survival skills after their hospital stays. Our classes are much more like attending diabetes college."

The Diabetes Self-Management Education Classes are covered by most insurance plans, including Medicare and Medicaid. A doctor's referral is required to attend the Diabetes Self-Management Education Class.

"When nurses put in a referral for the classes under a doctor, per protocol, it must be a doctor who is going to follow-up with that patient after the hospital stay," Carol said.

The Diabetes Center also offers a one-year Prediabetes Program to employees and is partnering with Purdue University to offer free healthy cooking classes. To learn more, call the Diabetes Center at 219-738-5802.



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