How can I connect with peers and peer support communities online or face-to-face? With a simple internet search, you can find this invaluable source of knowledge and support. Feel free to lurk, tip-toe in, or fully engage. Your peers with or affected by diabetes will welcome you with embracing arms.

Diabetes Peer Support Communities

People with and the people in their lives affected by or at risk for diabetes can benefit in many ways by engaging with each other. Over the last decade a number of peer support communities have developed and evolved. They’ve also been referred to as the diabetes online communities (DOC). Collectively, these communities are a global conglomerate of people with diabetes, caregivers, diabetes healthcare providers, foundations, organizations, and associations who, within the diabetes world, are engaging online using social media and networks or in venues face-to-face. The goal of these communities is to offer support, share knowledge, and provide practical advice to improve the lives and health of people with diabetes. Think of these communities and the engaged members as a home for everyone and anyone touched by diabetes. There are no borders. The intention is to unite a global community.

Why Should I Connect With Peer Support Communities?

- Get and give support
- Offer practical insights about dealing with diabetes
- Share challenges and stresses
- Minimize the isolation of living with and caring for diabetes
- Stay abreast of diabetes research, technologies, treatments, and more
- Find someone going through the same stage of life with diabetes (college, complications, pregnancy, retirement)
- Advocate for diabetes causes and concerns
How to Gain Peer Support Online

As you engage online with peers and/or in peer support communities you'll discover that there are diabetes blogs and sites for everyone. Find your space, find your voice and share your experiences.

**Personal Blogs**

Learning from your peers is always a great way to enrich your diabetes knowledge. There's a wide group of diabetes bloggers around the world that share their experiences. It's easy, just search Diabetes Bloggers and be ready to learn, find support and feel less isolated. As you explore, realize that there are many different perspectives on diabetes management, and what works for someone else might not be best for you. Always check with your diabetes educator or healthcare professional before taking any advice.

**Twitter**

Engage with your peers and the communities on twitter with these hashtags: #DIABETES #DOC #DSMA #peersupport #T1D #type1diabetes #T2D #type2diabetes #Livebeyond #wearenotwaiting #nightscout

**Weekly Twitter Chats**

Diabetes Social Media Advocacy Wednesdays 9 PM EST twitter.com/DiabetesSocMed - #DSMA

**Facebook**

There is a broad variety of groups and pages that offer conversations for specific audiences or topics like groups for parents, significant others, caregivers, about devices, therapies and by geographic location. You can connect with these groups by searching “diabetes” within Facebook.

Diabetes Advocacy

People with, affected by diabetes and numerous nonprofit organizations have individually and collectively been able to amplify the voice of the diabetes community to support diabetes causes, research, treatment options, state and federal government actions, and more. Many of the organizations listed here offer opportunities to participate in advocacy efforts at every level of engagement — regulatory, educational, and legislative. We need everyone's involvement, what will you advocate for?

**Advocacy Organizations***

**DPAC / Diabetes Patient Advocacy Coalition**
diabetespac.org

**NDVLC / National Diabetes Volunteer Leadership Council**
ndvlc.org

*Most U.S. based nonprofit organizations also do advocacy work.*