

Diabetes Care: Merchandise, Management, & Medication



Diabetes affects over 34 million people and is the seventh leading cause of deaths here in the United States. In fact, in the last 20 years, the number of adults diagnosed with diabetes has more than doubled as the American population has aged and become more overweight or obese.¹

The chances are that many of your patients may have diabetes or do not know they are at risk for developing pre-diabetes. Your pharmacy can situate itself as the go-to diabetes resource within your community by working with your patients and educating them on diabetes care. Here are some tips on how your pharmacy can help oversee your diabetic patients with unique merchandise, medications, and management tips.

Merchandise

Pharmacies should provide patients with access to the right ancillary diabetes supplies like test strips, glucose meters, lancets, insulin syringes, and pen needles. Make sure to include a range of insulin syringes and pen needles designed for your patient's comfort and convenience. When choosing a pen needle, patients need to consider many offerings, from its gauge and length to its features. It is essential to find the one best fit for them.

In addition to ancillary items, create a diabetes section or end cap near your prescription counter. You can highlight things such as sugar-free candies, orthopedic footwear, and compression socks. (Tip: make sure to include both single and three packs of socks for those with diabetes. Look to increase color choices or print options -- nearly anything other than black or white stockings will catch one's eyes. For whatever reason, brown is a slow mover.)

Management

Diabetes management starts with you, their pharmacist. Helping manage your patient's diabetes will help avoid or delay serious health complications in them. Please work with your patients to develop healthy eating plans and provide educational resources like tips, strategies, and ideas to aid them at home. Make sure they understand how to take care of themselves and learn the skills to:

- Eat healthily
- Be active
- Check blood sugar (glucose)
- Take medicines
- Solve problems
- Reduce the risks of other health problems

Remember that managing blood sugar is the key to living well with diabetes, and eating well is the key to controlling blood sugar.

Medication

Diabetes can have multiple health implications, including effects on your patient's vision, feet, legs, and heart. Treating these conditions can require specific medications, like insulin, and patient adherence to these medications. Pharmacies also need to verify that patients are taking the correct medications to manage their diabetes. In addition to insulin, pharmacies can counsel patients and prescribers about other medicines to treat conditions that are common with diabetes. These drugs can include:

- Aspirin for heart health
- Drugs for high cholesterol
- High blood pressure medications²

Closing Thoughts

Independent pharmacies that offer disease management programs and resources for patients will become the pharmacies of choice within their communities and build better profits to their bottom lines. Knowing your patients' goals and being ready to help them with recommendations is key to helping them reach their targets.

Not sure where to start? Through our partnership with Aspire Health, Keystone has the solutions to set up your pharmacy as the go-to diabetes destination center in your community. Make sure to ask about our Preferred Diabetes Care Program with Owen Mumford. To learn more about our solutions, please connect with your Keystone Business Consultant via email at info@kpparx.com.

1. <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/basics/quick-facts.html>
2. <https://www.healthline.com/health/diabetes/medications-list>