

## You know what happens when you assume something... about diabetes tech?

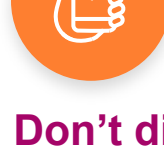
Tech-up Perspectives  
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In this issue, Diabetes Tech-up™ podcast cohost Amy Tenderich responds to some misconceptions about diabetes technology. There's also a [new podcast episode](#) about automated insulin delivery, as well as a [new article](#) from diabetes educator Amy Hess-Fischl about using technology to help people living with type 2 diabetes.



### Amy, what misconceptions do you encounter about diabetes technology, and how do you respond to them?

Diabetes tech is constantly evolving, and I love helping people get an accurate picture of what today's tech has to offer.<sup>1</sup> But when providers or people with diabetes approach tech with misconceptions, I find that they may hesitate to get started or inadvertently sabotage their efforts. There are 3 key areas I often find myself emphasizing when it comes to diabetes tech.



#### 1. Today's diabetes tech: Don't dismiss it till you've tried it

People with diabetes sometimes tell me they're hesitant about diabetes technology because of the problems they anticipate. They may believe it's too complicated, embarrassing to wear, uncomfortable, and so on, before they've even tried it. Similarly, some providers may assume certain patients won't be willing or able to use technology, so they don't bring up diabetes devices at all.<sup>2</sup>

As with any new skill, it's true that tech has a learning curve, and support is essential in helping people get comfortable with it.<sup>2</sup> But compared to when I was diagnosed in 2003, today's diabetes tech devices—including insulin pumps, connected insulin pens, and CGMs—are designed for streamlined use as well as clinical outcomes when used as part of a broader diabetes management regimen. They're built to work with apps and interfaces that can help minimize barriers to adoption for these technologies.<sup>3</sup>

In recent years I've seen tech companies recognize people's preference for tech that feels relatable and accessible, and they're elevating the user experience accordingly.

For instance, I'm now seeing more patient-friendly apps and device interfaces with customizable options. Many companies also provide user-friendly support like how-to videos to help train patients on their tech. The physical designs are improving too—CGM sensors have gotten smaller and can be worn discreetly under clothing, and I find that today's insulin pumps are less cumbersome than they used to be. I love that diabetes tech developers are working to make tech feel more compatible with being human.



#### 2. Remote monitoring doesn't have to overwhelm providers

Providers have expressed concerns to me that continuous data monitoring will affect their workflow, that they'll be flooded with an overwhelming stream of data from a CGM or smart pen. I don't think that has to be the case—remote monitoring doesn't have to mean the provider will get an alert every time a person's glucose is elevated. Technology can track patient data continuously, but the provider and patient can review it together during scheduled appointments.<sup>4</sup>

While it may seem counterintuitive, patients having access to copious data may actually help them become more autonomous and need less frequent guidance from providers.<sup>4</sup> When I was doing intense aerobics classes several times a week, my glucose was fluctuating more than I realized. I thought I had been adjusting my insulin doses appropriately, but I had really been creating a roller coaster of highs and lows on those days. My provider spotted the trend with my CGM data, and we tweaked my insulin dosing based on my activity, giving me the knowledge to make future adjustments on my own. Analyzing the data with her helped me manage my glucose more independently.



#### 3. Patients' families can be a great source of support—if they're properly engaged

Each person with diabetes needs to have someone close to them who "gets it." Some providers may assume that their patients' families are on board with their care plan, when in fact they may not be involved at all. I've heard from family members who mistakenly believe that once the provider prescribes diabetes tech, the patient no longer needs to self-manage. Ideally, people with diabetes and their families should be equally informed.

I recommend that providers invite patients' families to participate in conversations about diabetes tech. Family members can help with the practicalities, be allies during emotionally challenging times, and help their loved ones stay on track with self-management.<sup>5</sup> Family support can take many forms. Examples I've seen include:

- A parent helping their kid with diabetes warm up to wearing an insulin pump or CGM sensor
- A teenager assisting their parent with diabetes by helping them download an app
- A loved one checking in when they get a notification about a missed insulin dose

A little guidance from a provider can go a long way toward helping people understand diabetes technology. You can help your patients and their families avoid misconceptions by staying up to date about diabetes tech, and you may find that you dispel some misconceptions of your own. Engage in continuing education, talk with certified diabetes care and education specialists, or use resources like Diabetes Tech-up™ to help keep yourself and your patients fully informed.



#### Amy Tenderich, MA, Founder of DiabetesMine

Amy is a journalist, nationally known patient advocate, and diabetes tech expert working to connect patients, providers, and industry leaders. Amy received a fee from Novo Nordisk for her participation.

### Latest on DiabetesTechUp.com



#### PODCAST

#### Ep 7: Not your father's insulin delivery—automated insulin delivery systems and practical data talk

Our cohosts dig into automated insulin delivery and explore how we can make diabetes data accessible and useful to different types of patients.

17 min listen

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#### ARTICLE

#### Tech is for type 2s, too

How providers can use diabetes technology to address the needs of people with type 2 diabetes.

Amy Hess-Fischl, MS, RDN, LDN, BC-ADM, CDCES

| 6 min read

[Read the article →](#)



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#### The Mission of Diabetes Tech-up™

Diabetes Tech-up™ is sponsored by Novo Nordisk, a global leader in diabetes. We believe that adoption of innovative technologies can help appropriate patients better manage diabetes. Our goal is to help providers on the front line of diabetes care strengthen their understanding of diabetes technologies and implement them where they can have the greatest impact.



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