



## The Importance of Nursing and Nutrition Teams in Caring for Diabetic Patients

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### Summary

Diabetes mellitus is a chronic condition that requires multidisciplinary management to ensure the quality of life of patients. This article discusses the importance of nursing and nutrition teams in the care of diabetic patients, addressing the joint action of these professionals in health promotion, prevention of complications and health education. The literature review reveals that integration between nursing and nutrition is essential for glycemic control and adherence to treatment, resulting in better clinical outcomes.

**Keywords:** Diabetes mellitus, nursing, nutrition, multidisciplinary team, health care.

### ABSTRACT

Diabetes mellitus is a chronic condition that requires multidisciplinary management to ensure the quality of life of patients. This article discusses the importance of nursing and nutrition teams in the care of diabetic patients, addressing the joint action of these professionals in health promotion, prevention of complications and health education. The literature review reveals that integration between nursing and nutrition is essential for glycemic control and adherence to treatment, resulting in better clinical outcomes.

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### 1. Introduction

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Diabetes mellitus (DM) is one of the most prevalent chronic diseases in the world, affecting millions of people and representing a significant challenge for health systems (World Health Organization, 2021). With the increasing incidence of diabetes, especially type 2, due to factors such as obesity, sedentary lifestyle and



With the aging population, the need for effective management becomes increasingly urgent. Diabetes not only compromises the physical health of individuals, but also impacts their quality of life, leading to complications that can be serious and even fatal, such as cardiovascular disease, neuropathy and kidney problems.

Effective diabetes management requires a multidisciplinary approach, with nursing and nutrition teams playing crucial roles in promoting health and preventing complications (American Diabetes Association, 2020). Nursing teams are responsible for monitoring patients' health, educating them on the importance of self-care, and implementing interventions to improve adherence to treatment. On the other hand, nutritionists are essential in developing personalized meal plans that consider patients' nutritional needs and food preferences, in addition to promoting education on healthy food choices.

Collaboration between nurses and nutritionists is essential to ensure that diabetic patients receive comprehensive and coordinated care. This interaction not only improves glycemic control but also empowers patients to become protagonists of their health, promoting sustainable changes in their eating habits and lifestyle. This article aims to discuss the importance of collaboration between these professionals in the care of diabetic patients, highlighting their contributions to disease control and improved quality of life. Through the analysis of collaborative practices and the literature review, it will be possible to demonstrate how this integrated approach can result in better clinical outcomes and the promotion of patient well-being.

## 2. Diabetes Mellitus: An Overview

Diabetes mellitus (DM) is a chronic condition characterized by high blood glucose levels resulting from defects in the secretion or action of insulin, a hormone essential for glucose regulation. There are two main types of diabetes: type 1, which is an autoimmune disease that destroys the beta cells of the pancreas responsible for producing insulin, and type 2, which is more common and is often associated with risk factors such as obesity, physical inactivity and genetic predisposition. The prevalence of diabetes has increased globally, becoming a major public health concern, with the World Health Organization (WHO) estimating that more than 422 million people live with the disease worldwide.

Diabetes management involves tight control of glucose levels, which can be achieved through a combination of medications, regular blood glucose monitoring, a balanced diet, and physical activity (American Diabetes Association, 2020). Uncontrolled diabetes can lead to serious complications, including cardiovascular disease, neuropathy, retinopathy, and kidney problems, which significantly impact patients' quality of life. In addition, diabetes can cause acute complications, such as diabetic ketoacidosis and hyperosmolar hyperglycemic syndrome, which require immediate medical attention (International Diabetes Federation, 2019).

Health education is essential for self-care and adherence to treatment, allowing patients to understand the importance of glycemic control and lifestyle changes. A multidisciplinary approach, involving nursing, nutrition and other health professionals, is essential to ensure effective management of diabetes, promoting the prevention of complications and improving patients' quality of life (Buse et al., 2020).

### **3. The Importance of the Nursing Team.**

Nursing teams play a fundamental role in the care of diabetic patients, being responsible for several activities, including:

#### **3.1. Monitoring and Evaluation**

Nurses are responsible for regularly monitoring blood glucose levels, assessing signs and symptoms of hypoglycemia and hyperglycemia, and identifying complications (Bennett et al., 2019). Continuous assessment allows for adjustments to the care plan and early interventions.

#### **3.2. Health Education**

Health education is one of the main functions of the nursing team. Nurses provide information about the disease, treatment, self-care, and the importance of adherence to treatment (Funnell et al., 2019). Structured education programs have been shown to improve glycemic control and quality of life in patients.

#### **3.3. Psychological Support**

A diabetes diagnosis can cause emotional and psychological stress. Nurses are in a unique position to provide emotional support and refer patients to mental health services when needed (Gonzalez et al., 2018).

#### **4. The Importance of the Nutrition Team**

Nutrition is an essential component in the management of diabetes mellitus, as adequate nutrition can help control blood glucose levels and prevent complications associated with the disease. Nutritional teams play a vital role in educating and supporting patients with diabetes by providing personalized guidance that considers individual needs, dietary preferences, and specific health conditions (Evert et al., 2019).

Nutritional intervention is essential to promote adherence to treatment and improve patients' quality of life, since diet directly influences glycemic control and nutritional status (American Diabetes Association, 2020).

Nutritionists are responsible for carrying out detailed nutritional assessments, which include analyzing dietary history, assessing nutritional status and identifying eating behaviors that may impact diabetes control (Funnell et al., 2019).

Based on this assessment, professionals develop individualized dietary plans that aim not only to control blood glucose levels, but also to promote healthy habits and prevent associated diseases, such as hypertension and dyslipidemia (Evert et al., 2019).

##### **4.1 Health education is a crucial function of nutrition teams.**

Nutritionists advise patients on carbohydrate counting, healthy food choices, and the importance of meal regularity, helping them develop skills to manage their condition effectively (Gonzalez et al., 2018).

Promoting a healthy lifestyle, which includes regular physical activity and adopting a balanced diet, is essential for controlling diabetes and reducing the risk of complications (American Diabetes Association, 2020).

Therefore, the role of the nutrition team is fundamental in the management of diabetes, as it is not

not only contributes to glycemic control, but also empowers patients to become protagonists of their health, promoting sustainable changes in their eating habits and lifestyle.

Diabetes mellitus is a chronic condition that requires multidisciplinary management to ensure effective treatment and quality of life for patients. In this context, collaboration between nursing and nutrition teams is essential for glycemic control and prevention of complications associated with the disease. The joint action of these professionals allows for a holistic approach that considers not only clinical aspects, but also behavioral and social aspects that influence the patient's health (American Diabetes Association, 2020).

### **5. Teamwork.**

Nursing teams are responsible for monitoring patients' health, performing regular glucose level assessments, and educating patients about the importance of self-care. Nurses play a crucial role in identifying complications and implementing interventions to improve adherence to treatment (Funnell et al., 2019).

On the other hand, nutritionists are essential in developing personalized dietary plans that consider patients' nutritional needs and food preferences, in addition to promoting education on healthy food choices (Evert et al., 2019).

Effective communication between nurses and dietitians is vital to successful treatment. Studies show that collaboration between these professionals results in better clinical outcomes, such as more effective glycemic control and reduced complications (Gonzalez et al., 2018).

For example, when a nurse identifies a pattern of hyperglycemia in a patient, he or she can consult with the nutritionist to adjust the meal plan, ensuring that the patient's needs are met in an integrated manner.

Furthermore, health education is an area where collaboration between nursing and nutrition stands out. Nurses can provide information on the importance of

nutrition in diabetes control, while nutritionists can delve into specific aspects of diet, such as carbohydrate counting and choosing foods with a low glycemic index (American Diabetes Association, 2020).

This collaborative approach not only improves patient knowledge about their condition, but also promotes self-confidence and the ability to manage diabetes effectively.

The implementation of group education programs, where nurses and nutritionists work together, has been shown to be effective in promoting behavior change and treatment adherence. These programs provide a space for patients to share experiences, ask questions, and learn from each other, strengthening social support and motivation (Funnell et al., 2019).

Interaction between healthcare professionals and patients in a collaborative environment can result in a significant increase in treatment adherence and patient satisfaction.

Additionally, the multidisciplinary team can hold regular meetings to discuss specific cases, assess patient progress, and adjust treatment plans as needed. This practice not only improves communication among professionals but also ensures that everyone is aligned regarding treatment goals and strategies to be adopted (Evert et al., 2019).

The exchange of information and experiences between nurses and nutritionists is essential for building a care plan that meets the individual needs of each patient.

## **6. Conclusion**

The collaboration of nursing and nutrition teams is essential for the effective management of diabetes mellitus. Collaboration between these professionals not only improves glycemic control and adherence to treatment, but also promotes a patient-centered approach that considers the patient's needs and preferences. The integration of nursing and nutrition actions results in better clinical outcomes and the promotion of health and well-being in diabetic patients.

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