
Understanding Diabetes

MARIE CLARK



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Understanding Diabetes

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About the author

DR MARIE CLARK is a chartered health psychologist who specialises in working with individuals with diabetes. She has extensive experience of working with people with chronic disorders, in particular type 2 diabetes and obesity. Dr Clark carried out a special study on developing and implementing a lifestyle self-management intervention for people with type 2 diabetes and this work formed the basis of her PhD. She works closely with Diabetes UK and is on the committee for Primary Care Diabetes UK. She currently works as a lecturer in health psychology and continues her research into incorporating both psychological research and practice into the management of diabetes to ensure optimal care and quality of life for those individuals living with diabetes.

Preface

Diabetes is one of the most common of the chronic medical disorders and is expected to present one of the twenty-first century's biggest medical challenges. The number of people with diabetes is escalating both in the UK and world wide and type 2 diabetes in particular is increasing at an alarming rate. Diabetes is also unique among the chronic illnesses in the degree to which patient behaviour influences both the application and outcomes of therapy. In diabetes, patients deliver over 95 per cent of their own care.

Diabetes and its consequences have a fundamental physical basis, but these are deeply intertwined with complex psychological issues. Such interrelationships are considerable, sometimes subtle and sometimes overwhelming. Awareness of these issues is crucial to enabling people with diabetes to lead a healthy and fulfilled life. *Understanding Diabetes* seeks to bridge the gap between the medical and psychological research on the self-care and management of diabetes in an easily accessible format and includes background information and practical guidelines on behavioural and psychological issues, emphasising personal experiences and outlining details of where further information can be found.

If you have just been diagnosed with diabetes, if you are already living with diabetes and want to find out more about it, if you are a parent, carer or friend of someone who has diabetes, or if you are interested in diabetes for some other reason, this book aims to help you. It will tell you about diabetes, its symptoms and associated problems, both physical and psychological, what causes it and how it can be treated and, importantly, how your own state of mind can help or hinder how you cope with it.

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