

Helping your loved one discuss type 2 diabetes and heart health with their doctor



For people with type 2 diabetes and a history of heart disease, **controlling their blood sugar alone may not be enough. But there are medications that – along with diet and exercise – have been proven to lower the risk** of dying from problems related to the heart and blood vessels.

Use the guide below to help start a conversation with your loved one's doctor. Together, you can create a plan to reduce their risk of heart disease, heart failure and stroke.

Here are some questions you or your loved one can ask their doctor



Should we be concerned about heart health or the risk of heart disease?



What else can we do to manage our heart health?



What lifestyle changes can we make to lower the risk of heart disease?



Am I on a medication that can reduce their risk of dying from problems related to the heart and blood vessels?



What other factors can contribute to the risk of heart disease?

In Canada, there are currently two available treatments indicated, along with diet and exercise, to **reduce the risk of dying from heart disease** for people with type 2 diabetes and a history of heart disease. **For more information about these options, talk to your loved one's doctor.**

Remember to take care of yourself – even when you're taking care of someone else. Caring for a loved one can be challenging. It's important to take care of your own health and well-being too.

Keep the heart top of mind

Understanding heart disease and its relation to type 2 diabetes may help you and your loved one have a more meaningful conversation with their doctor.

What is heart disease?

Heart disease is a group of conditions that can affect the structure and functions of the heart and its blood vessels. It occurs when the heart, or the blood vessels supplying blood to the heart, have been damaged.

What is the link between type 2 diabetes and heart disease?

Diabetes puts people at greater risk of heart disease and stroke, which are two of the most common causes of death from type 2 diabetes.



2–4x more likely to **develop** heart disease than people without diabetes



Over **3x** more likely to **be hospitalized** for heart health problems



May develop heart disease **15 years** earlier compared to people without diabetes



1 in 2 people with type 2 diabetes **dies due to heart disease**

How can you help protect their heart?

Proper management of type 2 diabetes may help prevent or delay the onset of diabetes complications such as heart disease.

There are also medications available in Canada that are indicated, along with diet and exercise, to reduce the risk of dying from events related to the heart or blood vessels if people have type 2 diabetes and a history of heart disease. Talk to your loved one's doctor for more information about these treatment options.

Support your loved ones in living a healthy lifestyle



Help them achieve and maintain a healthy body weight



Help them establish a routine to check their blood sugar



Support them with healthier eating habits



Encourage them to visit their doctor regularly for check-ups

Check out [cart2table.ca](https://www.cart2table.ca) to find diabetes-friendly recipes you can make for your loved one

Help your loved one protect their heart by making it the reason they visit their doctor