Clarion Review

Health & Fitness

The Complete Diabetes Lifestyle

Donna Kay
Maribeth Stephens
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Five Stars (out of Five)

Life as a diabetic holds unique challenges that can seem overwhelming. Authors Kay and Stephens tell the story of how Kay adapted to her own diagnosis and learned to make modifications in diet lifestyle and even thought patterns. Kay now a diabetes lifestyle coach has teamed with Stephens a longtime writer to educate others by describing her own experience.

Clear accessible and sympathetic this book is an excellent guide for readers newly diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes—or for those in need of a dose of fresh insights and encouragement. Frustrations can abound in getting personalized attention in healthcare and Kay addresses the need to take responsibility for one's own health by putting in place a group of "friends"—dietitians endocrinologists even dentists—who understand diabetes and what it does to the body and with whom a patient can develop a good rapport. A proactive approach to self-education is also in order she says. Diabetics should make sure that all their questions are answered and keep track of their blood glucose levels food intake exercise and the way they feel.

Chatty and practical the book's engaging style makes the information much more palatable such as this bit on exercise: "A little extra effort to get air into your lungs is good when you exercise. Gasping for air and clutching your side is not."

Kay relates her own failures as well as successes which makes everything seem more realistic. She explains the reasoning behind constant measuring and testing and points out the tremendous difference that exercise can have on a diabetic's efforts to control blood sugar and weight gain. Confiding her own frustrations and setbacks then telling readers how she conquered them and keeps them at bay she's full of upbeat enthusiasm that is invaluable to someone facing a diagnosis that can feel like a life sentence.

The book explains basic information such as types of test kits the roles of different health

care professionals and how exercise can have a powerful effect on a diabetic's well-being. It also offers a brief discussion of alternative therapies such as massage and aromatherapy and information on the "mind—body connection"—a positive attitude can transform a person's approach to the disease. In a section at the back of the book the authors also provide handy forms and "fifty little things you can do to better manage your diabetes." These are indeed simple actions any one of which can make a difference not just in attitude but in overall health.

Compact and concise this book provides a manageable upbeat understanding of the disease—not just for diabetics but also for friends and family.

Marlene Satter