

Barriers to appropriate diabetes management among homeless people in Toronto

Table 3: Categories of difficulties with diabetes management described by study participants

Category	Examples of difficulties	No. (and %) of subjects*
Diet	Inappropriate diet at shelters; inability to make dietary choices	32 (64)
Scheduling and logistics	Inability to obtain insulin and diabetic supplies when needed; inability to coordinate medications with meals	9 (18)
Stress	Belief that daily stresses of being homeless exacerbate diabetes	4 (8)
Insulin syringes and needles	Fear of theft of syringes and needles; shelter forbids possession of needles	3 (6)
Alcohol abuse	Failure to adhere to diabetic regimen when drinking	2 (4)
Competing priorities	More concerned about obtaining shelter than about caring for diabetes	2 (4)
Exercise	Difficulty exercising	2 (4)
Obtaining medications	Lack of prescription drug benefits	2 (4)
No difficulties reported	–	14 (28)

*Sum of percentages is greater than 100 because each comment could be counted under more than one category.

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