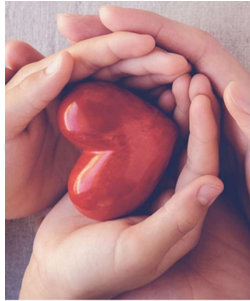


The Impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences on Health: A Personal Story of Resilience and Hope



Beverly Thomassian, RN,
MPH, BC-ADM, CDCES
President & Founder -
Diabetes Education Services
www.DiabetesEd.net

Disclosure to Participants



- ▶ Conflict of Interest (COI) and Financial Relationship Disclosures:
- ▶ None

2

Objectives:

- ▶ Discuss the benefits of assessing Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) in individuals with diabetes.
- ▶ State the relationship between ACE Scores and risk of future health complications.
- ▶ Describe a person-centered approach to fostering resilience and self-care for individuals with toxic stress.
- ▶ Identify two strategies to provide trauma informed care in your work setting.

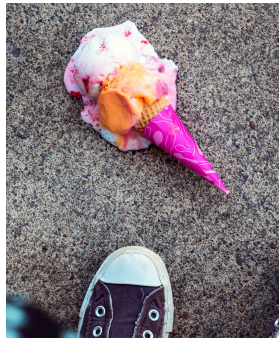
Diabetes is Complex

- ▶ Goal – achieve well being and satisfactory medical outcomes
- ▶ Psychological factors:
 - ▶ Environmental
 - ▶ Social
 - ▶ Behavioral
 - ▶ Emotional
- ▶ Keep it person centered while integrating care into daily life
 - ▶ Consider the individual

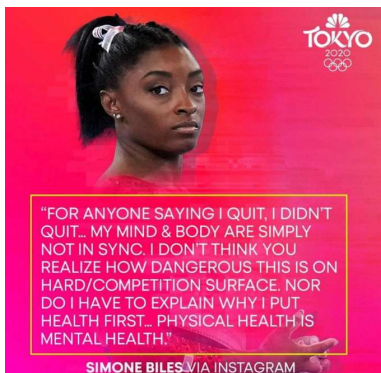


"I am falling"

- ▶ 53 yr old with type 1 diabetes.
- ▶ A1c 7.6
- ▶ B/P 130ish/80 ish
- ▶ No new meds started
- ▶ Teenager is "using drugs"
- ▶ Says they have fallen 3 times in last month



Physical Health is Mental Health



Well-Being Key Goal of Care

- ▶ Clinical outcomes, health status, and well-being are key goals of diabetes self-management education and support that need to be measured as part of routine care
- ▶ Psychological and social problems can impair the ability for self-care and lead to worse health outcomes.



ADA Standards of Care

Individualized Care Strategies

- ▶ Consider individualized care and create environmental structures to support people with:
 - ▶ Food insecurity
 - ▶ Cognitive dysfunction
 - ▶ Mental illness (2-3 x's higher rates of diabetes in schizophrenia, bipolar)
- ▶ HIV (meds can cause pancreatic dysfunction)
- ▶ History of trauma
- ▶ Health disparities related to:
 - ▶ Ethnicity, racism, culture, sex, socioeconomic status, LGBTQ



Question - What is ACE?

- ▶ ACE =
 - ▶ Adverse
 - ▶ Childhood
 - ▶ Experiences
 - ▶ (before 18 yrs)
- ▶ What is the relationship between childhood trauma and health?



Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) is Common

About **1 in 7** children experienced child abuse and neglect in the last year.



Estimated Cost of Child Abuse and Neglect



See [Child Abuse and Neglect Resources](#) for more resources about child abuse and neglect.

<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/fastfact.html>

10 Assessment Areas for ACE – Use 10 Question Screening Tool to Assess

ABUSE



Physical



Emotional



Sexual

NEGLECT



Physical



Emotional

HOUSEHOLD DYSFUNCTION



Mental Illness



Incarcerated Relative



Mother treated violently



Substance Abuse



Divorce

<https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2015/03/02/38700794/take-the-ace-quiz-and-learn-what-it-does-and-doesnt-mean>

Adverse Childhood Experience Questionnaire for Adults

California Surgeon General's Clinical Advisory Committee



Our relationships and experiences—even those in childhood—can affect our health and well-being. Difficult childhood experiences are very common. Please tell us whether you have had any of the experiences listed below, as they may be affecting your health today or may affect your health in the future. This information will help you and your provider better understand how to work together to support your health and well-being.

Instructions: Below is a list of 10 categories of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). From the list below, please add up the number of categories of ACEs you experienced prior to your 18th birthday and put the total number at the bottom. (You do not need to indicate which categories apply to you, only the total number of categories that apply.)

Did you feel that you didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, or had no one to protect or take care of you?	
Did you lose a parent through divorce, abandonment, death, or other reason?	
Did you live with anyone who was depressed, mentally ill, or attempted suicide?	
Did you live with anyone who had a problem with drinking or using drugs, including prescription drugs?	
Did your parents or adults in your home ever hit, punch, beat, or threaten to harm each other?	
Did you live with anyone who went to jail or prison?	
Did a parent or adult in your home ever swear at you, insult you, or put you down?	
Did a parent or adult in your home ever hit, beat, kick, or physically hurt you in any way?	
Did you feel that no one in your family loved you or thought you were special?	
Did you experience unwanted sexual contact (such as fondling or oral/anal/vaginal intercourse/penetration)?	
Your ACE score is the total number of yes responses.	

Do you believe that these experiences have affected your health? ☐ Not Much ☐ Some ☐ A Lot

Experiences in childhood are just one part of a person's life story. There are many ways to heal throughout one's life.

Please let us know if you have questions about privacy or confidentiality.

5/5/20

Adult ACE Questionnaire

<https://www.acesaware.org/learn-about-screening/screening-tools/>

<https://acesourcenetwork.com/>

<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/about.html>

<https://numberstory.org/>



A Note to My Colleagues

- ▶ Many of us have experienced childhood trauma
- ▶ This information may evoke strong feelings or difficult memories
- ▶ You may want to share your story or maybe you're not ready.
- ▶ We will discuss coping and healing strategies.
- ▶ Counseling can help



ACE Screening Tool – Multiple Languages Available

Screening tools are available in:

Arabic	+
Armenian	+
Cambodian	+
Chinese	+
English	+
Farsi	+
Hindi	+
Hmong	+
Japanese	+
Korean	+
Laotian	+
Punjabi	+
Russian	+
Spanish	+
Tamil	+
Thai	+
Vietnamese	+

<https://www.acesaware.org/learn-about-screening/screening-tools/screening-tools-additional-languages/>

Pediatric ACEs and Related Life-events – PEARLS for Peds



The Pediatric ACEs and Related Life-events Screener (PEARLS) is used to screen children and adolescents ages 0-19 for ACEs

PEARLS in English

- Child (Parent-Caregiver Report) – De-identified (English)
- Child (Parent-Caregiver Report) – Identified (English)
- Child (Parent-Caregiver Report) – Part 1 De-identified, Part 2 Identified (English)
- Teen (Parent-Caregiver Report) – De-identified (English)
- Teen (Parent-Caregiver Report) – Identified (English)
- Teen (Parent-Caregiver Report) – Part 1 De-identified, Part 2 Identified (English)
- Teen (Self-Report) – De-identified (English)
- Teen (Self-Report) – Identified (English)
- Teen (Self-Report) – Part 1 De-identified, Part 2 Identified (English)

Many families experience stressful life events. Over time these experiences can affect your child's health and wellbeing. We would like to ask you questions about your child so we can help them be as healthy as possible.

<https://www.acesaware.org/learn-about-screening/screening-tools/>

Pediatric ACEs and Related Life Events Screener (PEARLS)

CHILD - To be completed by: **Caregiver**

At any point in time since your child was born, has your child seen or been present when the following experiences happened? Please include past and present experiences.

Please note, some questions have more than one part separated by "OR." If any part of the question is answered "Yes," then the answer to the entire question is "Yes."

PART 1:

- Has your child ever lived with a parent/caregiver who went to jail/prison?
- Do you think your child ever felt unsupported, unloved and/or unprotected?
- Has your child ever lived with a parent/caregiver who had mental health issues?
(for example, depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, PTSD, or an anxiety disorder)
- Has a parent/caregiver ever insulted, humiliated, or put down your child?
- Has the child's biological parent or any caregiver ever had, or currently has a problem with too much alcohol, street drugs or prescription medications use?
- Has your child ever lacked appropriate care by any caregiver?
(for example, not being protected from unsafe situations, or not cared for when sick or injured even when the resources were available)
- Has your child ever seen or heard a parent/caregiver being screamed at, sworn at, insulted or humiliated by another adult?
OR Has your child ever seen or heard a parent/caregiver being slapped, kicked, punched, beaten up or hurt with a weapon?
- Has any adult in the household often or very often pushed, grabbed, slapped or thrown something at your child?
OR Has any adult in the household ever hit your child so hard that your child had marks or was injured?
OR Has any adult in the household ever threatened your child or acted in a way that made your child afraid that they might be hurt?
- Has your child ever experienced sexual abuse?
(for example, anyone touched your child or asked your child to touch that person in a way that was unwanted, or made your child feel uncomfortable, or anyone ever attempted or actually had oral, anal, or vaginal sex with your child)
- Have there ever been significant changes in the relationship status of the child's caregiver(s)?
(for example, a parent/caregiver got a divorce or separated, or a romantic partner moved in or out)

PEARLS Part 1 – Directed to Caregiver



<https://www.acesaware.org/learn-about-screening/screening-tools/>

PEARLS Part 2

PART 2:

- Has your child ever seen, heard, or been a victim of violence in your neighborhood, community or school?
(for example, targeted bullying, assault or other violent actions, war or terrorism)
- Has your child experienced discrimination?
(for example, being hassled or made to feel inferior or excluded because of their race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, learning differences, or disabilities)
- Has your child ever had problems with housing?
(for example, being homeless, not having a stable place to live, moved more than two times in a six-month period, faced eviction or foreclosure, or had to live with multiple families or family members)
- Have you ever worried that your child did not have enough food to eat or that the food for your child would run out before you could buy more?
- Has your child ever been separated from their parent or caregiver due to foster care, or immigration?
- Has your child ever lived with a parent/caregiver who had a serious physical illness or disability?
- Has your child ever lived with a parent or caregiver who died?

Add up the "yes" answers for the second section:





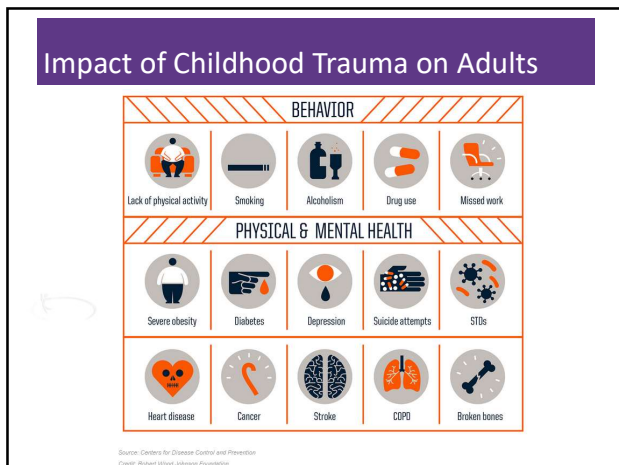
<https://www.acesaware.org/learn-about-screening/screening-tools/>

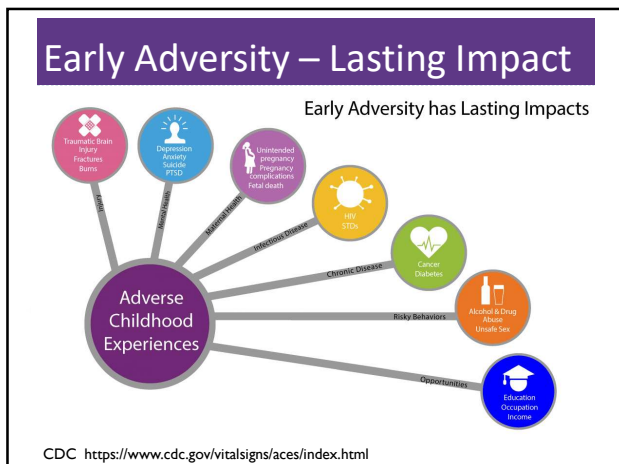
This tool was created in partnership with UCSF School of Medicine.

The impact of childhood trauma and Toxic Stress?

- Leads to:
 - Neuroendocrine dysregulation
 - Altered immune response
 - Disrupts DNA packaging
 - Epigenetic tags can alter genetic makeup







It's Worth Preventing ACEs

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
MMWR
Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report
Early Release Topic 68
November 5, 2019

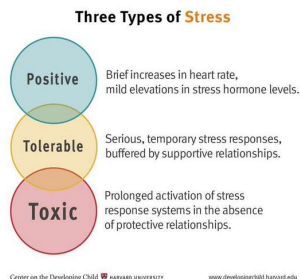
Preventing ACEs could reduce a large number of health conditions.

- UP TO 21 MILLION CASES OF DEPRESSION
- UP TO 1.9 MILLION CASES OF HEART DISEASE
- UP TO 2.5 MILLION CASES OF OVERWEIGHT/OBESITY

Half Way There – Stretch Break



Toxic Stress (ACEs) in Childhood



- ▶ **As Adults**
- ▶ Manifests as psychological issues (depression and anxiety)
- ▶ But also manifests as diseases like diabetes (regardless of lifestyle factors)

<https://numberstory.org/why-should-i-care-about-my-number-story/>

ACE increases risk for 9 out of 10 leading causes of death in US

Leading Cause of Death	Odds Ratio with ≥ 4 ACEs
▶ Heart Disease	▶ 2.1
▶ Stroke	▶ 2.0
▶ Diabetes	▶ 1.4
▶ Kidney Disease	▶ 1.7
▶ Cancer	▶ 2.3
▶ Alzheimer's	▶ 4.2
▶ Suicide(attempts)	▶ 37.5

<https://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/aces/index.html>

Awareness >> to Healing

Yet many people, parents, health professionals, and educators don't know about ACEs. This lack of knowledge leads to significant illness and unimaginable expense – much of which could be averted through awareness, education, and action.



<https://acresourcenetwork.com/>
You can heal from ACEs.

ACEs have affected all of us in one way or another. ACEs are what happened to us. They are not who we are. They are part of our story and they shape it. If our well-being has been affected, change is possible and there is hope.

What can Diabetes Specialists do?

► We can identify people who experienced toxic stress and take action.

Provide	Provide ACE screening tool as part of intake process.
Acknowledge	Acknowledge Results.
Provide	Provide trauma informed care.

As health care providers, let's Ask!

- Trauma can have a significant impact on health
- What might be traumatic for one person may not be traumatic for another
- People may want to compartmentalize painful experiences from the past
- But chronic stress associated with trauma can wreak havoc on long term health.



As health care providers, asking about trauma let's people know we care and we hear them!

The Act of Recognition is Healing



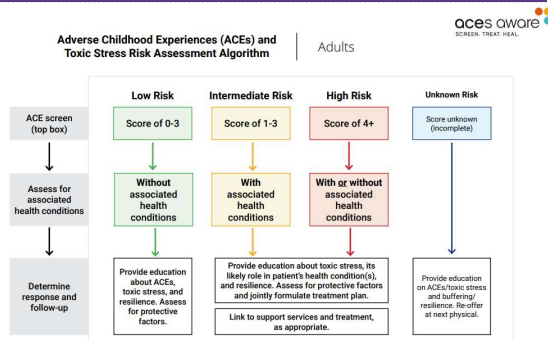
**By recognizing
trauma, we give
voice to the unheard.**

**We offer hope for
healing.**

**We participate in
breaking the cycle.**

~ Coach Beverly

Provide ACE Screening tool. Ask how many ACEs they have (0 – 10) then use this treatment plan



<https://www.acesaware.org/treat/clinical-assessment-treatment-planning/>

Client Action

- Not keeping appointments
- Not taking meds as prescribed
- Not adopting new behaviors

Providing Trauma Informed Approach

Provider Reaction

- Refrain from accusatory language or judgement
- Encourage collaboration
- Be curious
- Ask open ended questions

How to Ask questions about trauma



In addition to the stresses of daily life, sometimes people with diabetes might have experienced something particularly difficult or traumatic.



We also know that experiencing violence is very common in many people's lives.



I'm just wondering if there's anything like this you might want to talk about?

Another way to ask about trauma

- ▶ Sometimes adults also have health issues if they experienced things like abuse, neglect or a family member with drug abuse or mental illness.
- ▶ If anything like that has happened to you, we have resources to help.



Disclosing Trauma

Some people may not disclose their histories when first asked:

- Fear of retribution
- Poor response from a previous health provider
- Shame or guilt about what has happened to them
- A feeling that the information is irrelevant

However, having this conversation is vital

Life can change quickly – Patients need to know your healthcare setting is a safe place

ACEs are Not Destiny

Diabetes Care
Specialists can help
interrupt
intergenerational
transmission of toxic
stress



► ‘With early detection and evidence-based intervention, we can transform health outcomes’

Nadine Burke Harris, MD
1st Surgeon General of California
Pediatrician, Activist, Role Model

Supporting Resilience



The clinical response to identification of toxic stress should include:

1. Applying principles of trauma-informed care, including establishing trust, safety, and collaborative decision-making.

2. Supplementing usual care for ACE-Associated Health Conditions with patient education on toxic stress and discussing strategies that can help regulate the stress response, including:




- Supportive relationships, including with caregivers (for children), other family members, and peers
- High-quality, sufficient sleep
- Balanced nutrition
- Regular physical activity
- Mindfulness and meditation
- Experiencing nature
- Mental health care, including psychotherapy or psychiatric care, and substance use disorder treatment, when indicated



3. Validating existing strengths and protective factors.

4. Referrals to patient resources or interventions, such as educational materials, social workers, school agencies, care coordination or patient navigation, and community health workers.

<https://numberstory.org/>

**Print and fill in or
Type in the Goals**

ACES Aware Self-Care Tool for Adults

When a person has experienced significant Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), their body may make more or less stress hormones than is healthy. This can lead to physical and/or mental health problems, such as diabetes, heart disease, anxiety, smoking, or unhealthy use of alcohol or other drugs. Safe, stable, and nurturing relationships can protect our brains and bodies from the harmful effects of stress and adversity. The following tips can help you manage your stress response. Healthy nutrition, regular exercise, restful sleep, practicing mindfulness, building social connections, and getting mental health support can help decrease stress hormones and improve health. Here are some goals you can set to support your health. [Check the goals that you are choosing for yourself]




☐ **Healthy relationships.** I've set a goal of...

- ☐ Spending more high-quality time together with loved ones, such as:
 - ☐ Having regular meals together
 - ☐ Having regular "no electronics" time for us to talk and connect with each other
- ☐ Making time to see friends and create a healthy support system for myself
- ☐ Connecting regularly with members of my community to build social connections
- ☐ Asking for help if I feel physically or emotionally unsafe in my relationships
 - ☐ The National Domestic Violence hotline is **800-799-SAFE (7233)**
 - ☐ The National Sexual Assault hotline is **800-656-HOPE (4673)**
 - ☐ To reach a crisis text line, **text HOME to 741-741**
- ☐ Create your own goal: _____

☐ **Exercise.** I've set a goal of...

- ☐ Limiting screen time to less than _____ hours per day
- ☐ Walking at least 30 minutes every day
- ☐ Finding a type of exercise that I enjoy and doing it regularly
- ☐ Create your own goal: _____

<https://www.acesaware.org/treat/clinical-assessment-treatment-planning/>

Mental Health Goals

☐ **Mental health.** I've set a goal of...

- ☐ Learning more about mental health and/or substance use services (e.g., counseling, groups, medications)
- ☐ Identifying a local mental health professional or support group
- ☐ Scheduling an appointment with a mental health professional
- ☐ If I am feeling that I am in crisis, I will get help
 - ☐ The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is **800-273-TALK (8255)**
 - ☐ To reach a crisis text line, **text HOME to 741-741**
- ☐ Create your own goal: _____

Here are some other goals that you can set to help yourself be healthier.

☐ **Self-Care.** I've set a goal of...

2 www.acesaware.org

☐ Limiting screen/social media time to less than _____ hours per day

☐ Making a plan for what to do when I'm feeling stressed out, angry, or overwhelmed

☐ Planning with my partner, friends, or family to get support when I need it

☐ Making regular appointments with my medical provider(s), including for preventive care

☐ Identifying my strengths and learning more about building resilience

☐ Create your own goal: _____

For more information, please visit: <https://www.acesaware.org/health/resources/>

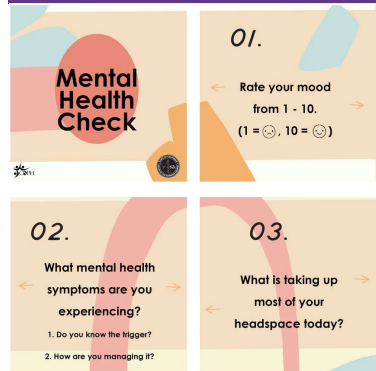
From ACEs Aware: <https://www.acesaware.org/health/resources/>

Mental Health and Substance Use:

- The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI): <https://www.nami.org/help>
 - 1-800-950-NAMI (6264) **Crisis Text Line** - **Text HOME to 741-741**
- The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Facilities Locator: <https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/locator/>

<https://www.acesaware.org/treat/clinical-assessment-treatment-planning/>

Mental Health Check



Trauma Awareness Toolkit California
Department of Public Health Social Media Messaging:
Instagram Carousel: Mental Health Check

<https://aceresourcenetwork.com/>

Helping with Healing

How do you
manage
your triggers?

How can you
show yourself the
same compassion
you show others?



Actions We Can Encourage That Help Buffer Toxic Stress Response



Optimism and Resilience

► Encourage Optimism and Resilience:

- Hardiness and humor, resources, self confidence!
- Develop network of specialists to help YOU for your own self balance and care!
- Action Pack for Happiness



GREAT DREAM

Ten keys to happier living

Action for Happiness has developed the 10 Keys to Happier Living based on a review of the latest scientific research relating to happiness.

Everyone's path to happiness is different, but the research suggests these ten things consistently tend to have a positive impact on people's overall happiness and well-being. The first five relate to how we interact with the outside world in our daily activities. The second five come more from inside us and depend on our attitude to life.

- GIVING** Do things for others
- RELATING** Connect with people
- EXERCISING** Take care of your body
- APPRECIATING** Notice the world around
- TRYING OUT** Keep learning new things
- DIRECTION** Have goals to look forward to
- RESILIENCE** Find ways to bounce back
- EMOTION** Take a positive approach
- ACCEPTANCE** Be comfortable with who you are
- MEANING** Be part of something bigger

HAPPINESS
is not
something
ready made.
It comes
from your
own actions.
— Dalai Lama

“ People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel ” — Maya Angelou

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS Actionforhappiness.org

Quotes from “What Happened to You?”

- ▶ The lesson is that no matter what has happened, you get a chance to rewrite the script.
(You are not your number.)
- ▶ I wouldn't be who I am without my trauma, so I own it.
- ▶ I use my trauma in service to others - empathy, compassion and forgiveness.

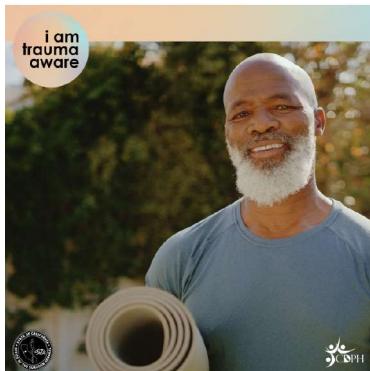
Quotes from “What Happened to You?”

Trauma and adversity, in a way, are gifts.

All of us who have been broken and scarred by trauma have the chance to turn those experiences into post-traumatic wisdom.

Forgive yourself, forgive them.
Step out of your history and into the path of your future.

Become Trauma Aware



Please visit this site | Free Training



Being Trauma Aware saves lives



*I finally feel like someone actually
cares what happened to me and is
providing me with help and support!*

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- ▶ <https://twitter.com/CDECoach>
- ▶ <https://www.instagram.com/cdcescoach/>
- ▶ <https://www.linkedin.com/in/beverlythomassian/>

Sign up for Blog Bytes – Question of Week

- ▶ <https://diabetesed.net/diabetes-blog-bytes-sign-up/>

Thank You



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