

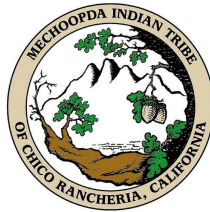


So, You Didn't Pass your CDCES Exam...YET!

Beverly Thomassian, RN, MPH, BC-ADM, CDCES
Pronouns: She, her, and hers
President, Diabetes Education Services

Land Acknowledgment

► We acknowledge and are mindful that Diabetes Education Services stands on lands that were originally occupied by the first people of this area, the Mechoopda, and we recognize their distinctive spiritual relationship with this land, the flora, the fauna, and the waters that run through this area.



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Beverly Thomassian, RN, MPH, CDCES, BC-ADM
CEO, coach, instructor, cheerleader, mentor

www.DiabetesEd.net | info@diabetesed.net | 530-893-8635

Question of the Week & Sample Questions

Prep for CDCES Exam – Step 2

- ▶ This FREE Webinar may be helpful too!
- ▶ Getting ready to take Certified Diabetes Care and Education Specialist Exam Soon!
 - ▶ Exam content
 - ▶ Study strategies
 - ▶ Test taking tips
 - ▶ [Resources](#)



- ▶ View our “Becoming a CDCES” Step 1 Webinar for info on qualifications and gaining practice hours.

This is a challenging exam!

SO YOU DIDN'T PASS CDCES EXAM?



...YET!

Not passing the CDCES exam can feel disheartening—but you are not alone. Over 30% of healthcare professionals don't pass the CDCES exam on their first try. T

his one setback doesn't define your potential or your ability to succeed.

Topics:

1. Dealing with test anxiety.
2. Addressing the critical voice
3. Test taking strategies
4. Test taking tools
5. Meditation for exam

Join Coach Bev to Regroup & Reignite your Confidence!

FREE Webinar (No CEs)

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Combating Test Anxiety

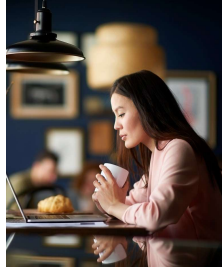
- ▶ Strategies for Healthcare Professionals Preparing for Diabetes Certification Exams



Spend a moment remembering your testing experience.
How were you feeling?
Hungry? Thirsty?
Sweaty Palms, fast heart rate, difficulty concentrating?

What is Test Anxiety?

- ▶ A psychological condition triggered before or during an exam
- ▶ Often involves fear of failure, perfectionism, or imposter syndrome.
- ▶ Symptoms:
 - ▶ Physical: nausea, sweating, rapid heartbeat
 - ▶ Emotional: dread, helplessness
 - ▶ Cognitive: brain fog, racing thoughts



Why HCPs Are Especially Vulnerable

- ▶ High standards for performance and competence
- ▶ Fear of professional embarrassment or letting others down
- ▶ Many juggle family, work, and exam prep
- ▶ Long gap since last standardized test



What About Imposter Syndrome?



Recognizing Impostor Syndrome

We have discussed the fear of taking risks, but have you experienced fear or self-doubt about your intellect, skills, or accomplishments, even though your success is evident to everyone? Fear and self-doubt can go hand in hand with impostor syndrome. This common syndrome affects up to half of high-achieving women in male-dominated industries. However, men also experience impostor syndrome, although they may be less likely to admit it or seek help.

Even after running my company for over 25 years, I still experience moments of doubt, feeling as if I've somehow faked my way to where I am. At times, someone might pull back the curtain and expose me as just a kid from Sylmar, trying to prove myself while holding everything together. From my first post-graduate job as a Health Education Department manager at 28 to becoming a CEO, I've wrestled with the fear of being seen as an impostor—not smart enough, not qualified enough, not experienced enough. These feelings stem from deep-rooted childhood self-doubt and the real possibility of failing.

The truth is, I've made mistakes, plenty of them. I've stumbled, I've messed up, and yes, I've even failed. But I am not a failure.

Anyone who takes that first shaky step forward, who dares to raise a hand in defiance of fear, has already won a quiet victory. Like many of you, I still wrestle with impostor syndrome. But when it was time to step into the next chapter of my life, I pulled on my big girl pants, took a deep breath, and chose courage over fear.

Reframe the Anxiety

- ▶ View anxiety as a signal of growth and care
- ▶ Use affirmations:
 - ▶ - “I am prepared and capable.”
 - ▶ - “I’ve faced bigger challenges—this is just one step.”
- ▶ Normalize anxiety: it’s common and manageable



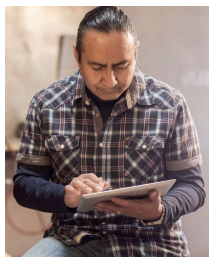
Prepare with Purpose

- ▶ Create a study plan with weekly goals
 - ▶ Focus on areas with knowledge gaps.
- ▶ Use active recall: flashcards, teaching others.
- ▶ Take lots of practice quizzes.
- ▶ Vary study methods: visual, auditory, hands-on
- ▶ Move and study, podcasts
- ▶ Join a study group or course for structure & accountability



Practice Under Pressure

- ▶ Simulate test conditions:
 - ▶ - Timed quizzes
 - ▶ - No notes
 - ▶ - Distraction-free zone
- ▶ Get familiar with the digital testing platform



The Day Before and Day Of

Day Before:	• Review notes, not new material	• Light exercise
• Prep clothes, ID, snacks	Test Day:	• Arrive early
• Use calming techniques	• Visualize success	• Positive self-talk

If Anxiety Shows Up Mid-Test

The 5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Technique

Ease your state of mind in stressful moments.

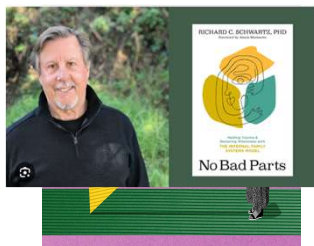


- Pause. Breathe. Reset.
- Use a calming mantra
- Flag hard questions and return later
- Try the 5-4-3-2-1 grounding technique

<https://healthymonday.com/stress-management/unwind-monday-5-4-3-2-1-grounding-technique>

Using Parts Therapy to Manage Test Anxiety for Healthcare Professionals

- ▶ A method for understanding and working with internal 'parts' of ourselves
- ▶ Each part has a role—protector, critic, achiever, etc.
- ▶ The goal is integration, not suppression



Common Inner Parts in Test Anxiety



The Inner Critic: "You're not prepared."



The Perfectionist: "You can't make mistakes."



The Protector: Tries to prevent embarrassment or failure.



The Wise Self: Calm, supportive, grounded.

Step 1: Name and Acknowledge the Critic



Don't silence the inner critic—get curious



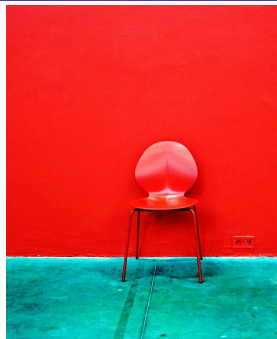
Ask: "What are you trying to protect me from?"



Understand that it's often trying to help

Step 2: Create Separation

- ▶ You are not your inner critic—it's just a part of you.
- ▶ Visualize placing it in a chair next to you
- ▶ Use affirmations like:
 - ▶ "This is one voice, not the whole truth."



Step 3: Invite Your Wise Self

- ▶ Connect with the calm, confident part of you.
- ▶ Ask: "What would my wise self say right now?"
- ▶ Use compassionate self-talk



Step 4: Rehearse the Inner Dialogue

- ▶ Critic: "You'll blank out."
- ▶ Wise Self: "I've prepared differently. I can reset and refocus."



Reflection Prompt



What does your inner critic say about the exam?



What does your wise self want you to know?



Who is cheering you on from within?

Step 5: Thank and Reassure the Critic

- ▶ “Thank you for trying to protect me.”
- ▶ “I’ve got this. You can rest now.”
- ▶ Gratitude disarms the inner critic (and hopefully they can take a nap).



The EXAM – Getting to the Nitty Gritty



Exam Details

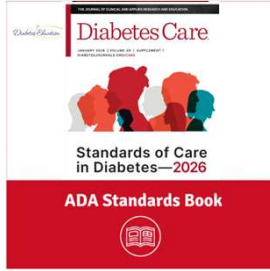
- ▶ Questions are linked directly to a task or tasks.
- ▶ Each question is designed to test if the candidate possesses the **knowledge necessary to perform the task or has the ability to apply it to a job situation.**
- ▶ 25 of the 175 questions are new - but are **not** counted in the determination of individual examination scores.
- ▶ Score based on 150 questions



Essential Study Tools



[E-Book] ADCES Review Guide



ADA Standards Book

DiabetesEd.net

Articles to Read to Prepare for CDCES Exam

ADA Standards of Care 2025 – This yearly publication by the American Diabetes Association outlines the national goals of care based on the latest research for diabetes management. This is one of the most important guidelines to read as a Certified Diabetes Care and Education Specialist.

Summary of Revisions: Standards of Care in Diabetes 2025 – The 2025 Standards of Care includes revisions to incorporate priorities and evidence base change. Efforts were made to consistently apply terminology that empowers people with diabetes and recognizes the individual at the center of diabetes care.

Pharmacologic Approaches to Glycemic Treatment – 2025 – This ADA/EAED hyperglycemia road map details strategies to improve glucose management for both Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes. Section 9 of Standards of Care, 2025.

Screening and Diagnosis of Diabetes Mellitus 2025 – One-page cheat sheet that summarizes screening, risk status, and diagnostic criteria for diabetes. Great for your office and as a study tool.

Med Cheat Sheets | Cholesterol and Hypertension Medications 2025 – These summary sheets are helpful for your clinical practice and preparing for certification exams. For exam success, be familiar with the general concepts, (side effects and precautions) of these medications.

Language & Diabetes: What we say matters | Resource page
Language is powerful and can have a strong impact on perceptions as well as behavior. This mini webinar and article provide recommendations for the language used by health care professionals and others when discussing diabetes through spoken or written words whether directed to people with diabetes, colleagues, or the general public, as well as research questions related to language and diabetes.



ADCES 7™ Self-Care Behaviors™ – A must-read for anyone entering the field of Diabetes or as a reference for those already in the field. These 7 Self-Care Behaviors™ provide a framework for patient-centered diabetes self-management education and training (DSME/T) and care.

American Association of Clinical Endocrinology Consensus Statement: Comprehensive Type 2 Diabetes Management Algorithm – 2023 Update – This link provides the complete executive and slide set summary by an American Association of Clinical Endocrinology/American College of Endocrinology Consensus Panel on Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus. If you are taking the CDCES or BC-ADM exam, we encourage students to be familiar with the content that reviews diabetes management.

2022 National Standards for Diabetes Self-Management Education and Support – A joint position statement of the American Diabetes Association, the American Association of Diabetes Educators, and the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. An important document to review for those providing Diabetes Self-Management Education or those considering taking the certification exam.

Landmark Studies – a short cheat sheets that highlights the major diabetes trials and the significant findings.

What to Study?

Join our CDCES Facebook Study Group

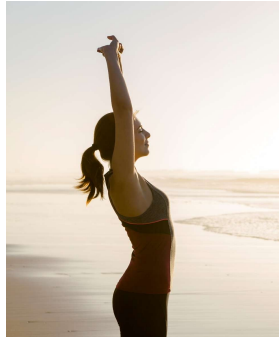


Certification Exam Study Group

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/diabeteseducationspecialiststudygroup>

Taking the Exam

- ▶ Questions
- ▶ Answers
- ▶ Pitfalls



Practical Application

Don't change answers unless you are absolutely sure.

Read each word outloud in your head.

Don't add anything into the question or answers.

All parts of the answer need to be correct.

Practice Tests are Critical

- ▶ Take lots of practice tests and uncover the reasoning behind choosing the wrong answer.
- ▶ Common reasons include:
 - ▶ Read question too fast
 - ▶ Not reading all the words
 - ▶ Choosing the medical response
 - ▶ Not starting where the person is at
 - ▶ Adding in your own life experiences
 - ▶ Ignoring the wise voice (little voice within)

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Consider what led you to choose the best or wrong answer.

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Question of the Week
Online Course Viewing

Direct camera to QR code to get to CDCES app page

Increase success

- ▶ If the answer you wanted isn't there – Pivot, breathe and readjust.
- ▶ Try not to overthink question/answers.
- ▶ Make sure that the answer you choose fits the situation.
- ▶ Focus on national goals and avoid using your work setting's goal.

Take a Practice Test – Learn how to “work” test questions

- ▶ Weed through the details
- ▶ Make sure you REALLY understand key intent of question
- ▶ Find the stem
 - ▶ Identifies key intent of the question
- ▶ Read all the options or answers
- ▶ Eliminate obvious wrong answers
- ▶ Select **BEST** option



Sample question 1

Based on the ADA Standards on Medical Nutrition Therapy (MNT), which statement is most accurate?

- A. MNT provided by a RD/RDN decreases A1C 0.3 to 2.0%
- B. A low carbohydrate, high protein diet is associated with risk of CKD.
- C. New DM2, try to achieve A1C targets with MNT for 3 mo's before using meds.
- D. People with DM, HTN have improved outcomes with sodium intake of less than 1,500 mg a day.

Sample question 2

JL is a new nursing graduate and asks you questions about glucose monitoring in the inpatient setting. Which of the following statements is most accurate regarding providing diabetes care in the hospital

- A. Nursing staff can use the patient's CGM glucose results to determine insulin dose.
- B. Any patient admitted with a confirmed BG of 140 or greater, needs to be started on insulin.
- C. Hospital point-of-care glucose meters are as accurate as lab BG results.
- D. If a patient is experiencing morning hypoglycemia, reduce basal insulin

Sample question 3

AR has type 1 diabetes and is in shock because they just discovered they are 6 weeks pregnant. AR uses a CGM and insulin pump to manage their diabetes and their most recent A1C is 8.3%. Which of the following is a potential complication associated with hyperglycemia during the first 10 weeks of pregnancy?

- A. Macrosomia and post-natal jaundice
- B. Diabetic embryopathy
- C. Intrauterine hypoglycemia
- D. Neonatal respiratory distress

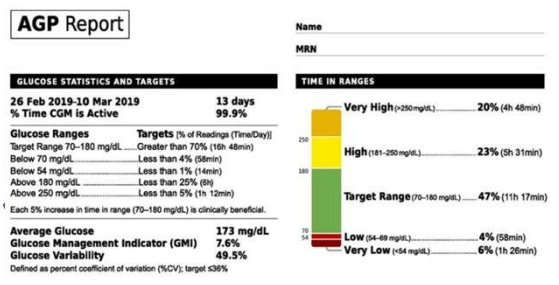
Sample question 4

LS wears an insulin pump and uses lispro insulin. LS has an average basal rate of 0.6 units and hour, a 1:15 carb ratio and a 1:50 correction ratio. Based on the ambulatory glucose profile, LS is experiencing elevated glucose levels from 4am to 7am. To get glucose to target, what is the best next step?

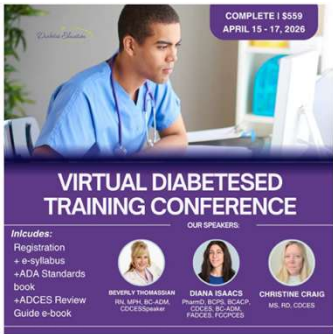
- A. Increase the basal rate to prevent glucose elevations
- B. Add basal insulin glargine to prevent Somogyi effect
- C. Make sure LS isn't consuming carbohydrates after 10pm
- D. Ask LS to double check their CGM insertion site

Sample question 4

LS is 72 years old with type 2 diabetes and injects insulin 4 times a day. They were started on a CGM device last month and you are looking at the Ambulatory Glucose Profile (AGP)



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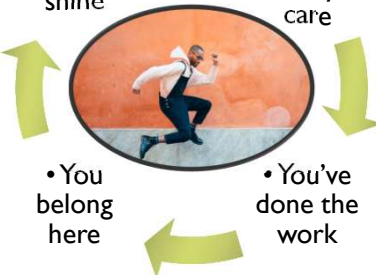
DANIELA BARROS
PharmD, BCPS, BCAGP
CCDE, FIDP, FIDP-AB
FACDE, FOCPCES

CHRISTINE CRAIG
MS, RD, CDEES

• Let your knowledge shine

• Anxiety is normal—it means you care

You've Got This



• You belong here

• You've done the work



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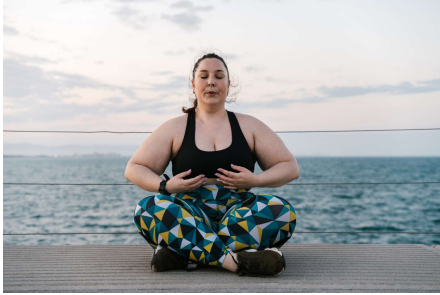
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Guided Meditation

▶ Meeting Your Inner Critic with Compassion



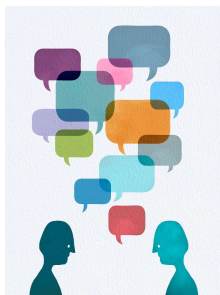
Introduction

- ▶ Sit comfortably
- ▶ Hands relaxed, eyes closed
- ▶ Deep breath in... and out
- ▶ Settle into this moment



Step 1: Acknowledge and Dialogue with the Inner Critic using Curiosity

- ▶ Bring to mind a thought around exam anxiety
- ▶ Hear the inner voice
- ▶ Recognize it's only one part of you
- ▶ Ask: "What are you trying to protect me from?"
- ▶ Listen without judgment
- ▶ Thank the part for trying to help



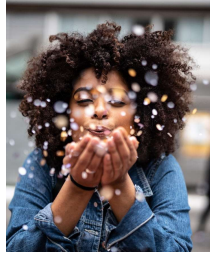
Step 2: Invite the Wise Self

- ▶ Call in the grounded, calm version of you
- ▶ Let it speak:
 - ▶ - "You've prepared."
 - ▶ - "You are enough."
 - ▶ - "You've got this."
- ▶ What other phrases might be helpful for You?



Step 3: Integration

- ▶ Visualize the critic stepping aside.
- ▶ Let the wise self take the lead.
- ▶ Breathe into that confidence.



Step 4: Closing

- ▶ Deep breath in... and out.
- ▶ Return to your body and breath.
- ▶ When ready, open your eyes.
- ▶ Carry this sense of calm with you.



Notes from Coach Bev



Final notes from Coach Beverly as you embrace the journey ahead



Take the risk. Say yes. Try that thing you've been putting off. Love your body exactly as it is. Be bold. Step into your authenticity. Make time to rediscover yourself. Think with your heart. Surrender. Show up. Move beyond your comfort zone and speak your truth. Get enough sleep. Ask for help when you need it. Stay connected to the people who lift you up. Seek out deep conversations, embrace your growth, and get ready for transformation.

I believe in you.

This is Coach Beverly, signing off.

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Certification Exam Study Group

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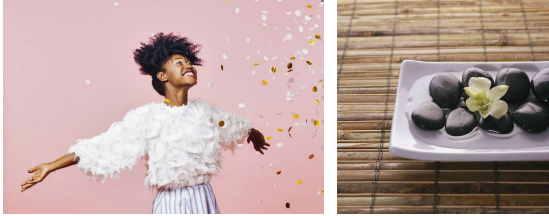
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Thank You



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