



## The 4 S's for Advocates

You likely know that many people with diabetes do not have all the supplies, financial resources, healthcare and social support they need. If you are a person with diabetes, this reality may have been the case for you at some point and it may even be the case now. **Prioritizing your needs is the first step in advocacy because if you are not healthy, you cannot advocate for others.**

In order to know when it is time to step back and focus completely on your own health needs, we recommend that you regularly **check in with yourself about the 4 S's of Self-Care by asking the below questions.**



Supplies



Stress



Sleep



Support

### Can you access all the SUPPLIES you need to feel safe?

- Do you have a way to monitor your blood sugar regularly?
- Do you have enough insulin and the right types?
- Do you have the food you need to eat in the way that helps you manage your blood sugar?

*As we all know, without the above it is difficult to focus on anything else. Access to supplies is essential for keeping you safe, healthy and able to advocate.*

## Have you been able to get enough SLEEP recently?

- Have you been able to take time to rest and recover from any health or other challenges?

Rest is critical to managing your blood sugar, so even if diabetes is not the reason you haven't been sleeping, it's important that you make time to rest, even if that means putting advocacy on hold.

## Are you able to manage STRESS?

- Are you dealing with stress in your life that might be impacting your health?
- Did you know that whether your stress is coming from coping with diabetes or from something else, stress affects your blood sugar?

Stress management is a key part of feeling well. For you, it may include exercise, spending time with loved ones, hobbies, meditating, prayer, or just doing nothing.

## Do you have the SUPPORT you need to manage diabetes day-to-day?

- Do you have the time and resources to get the support you need to manage your diabetes?

Your support network might include family members, friends, health care providers, your faith community, co-workers, your diabetes network in-person or online, T1International and other organizations.

**If you answer 'no' to any of the above questions then it is time to care for yourself and put your other advocacy efforts on pause.** If this is the case for you, reach out to us and let us know that you need to take a break.

