Managing diabetes can be a daunting task for patients with cancer. Empowerment-based diabetes education and motivational interviewing are complementary approaches. Oncology nurses may feel unprepared to teach patients and their families about self-care for diabetes, but they provide individualized information on symptom management of cancer throughout hospitalization and at discharge. The essential self-care issues include food, exercise, medication, blood glucose monitoring, prevention, recognition and treatment of hypoglycemia and hyperglycemia, and when and how to get additional medical and educational support. This patient-centered model of diabetes education differs from the older “compliance” model that covers many universal rules for all patients, which are predetermined by the nurse. Informing nurses about their role in care of patients with cancer and diabetes is critical.

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