

How to Participate in a Twitter Chat

Are you curious about how to participate in a Twitter chat? Excellent! It's important that healthcare professionals engage in social media. Participating in Twitter chats is one good way to engage. Keep in mind it's perfectly acceptable to lurk and learn before you fully jump in!

HERE ARE THE HOW-TO INSTRUCTIONS TO JOIN A TWITTER CHAT

- **To engage in a Twitter chat, you need a Twitter account and handle.**
- **Twitter chats are generally one hour. They are typically hosted by an organization with a chat facilitator.**
- **Know the hashtag (#) of the chat, the handle of the organization hosting the chat and the handle of the chat facilitator. It may also be helpful to know the handles of a few people who typically engage in the chat.**
 - ▶ LifeScan Diabetes Institute hosts several Twitter chats throughout the year for healthcare professionals who have an interest in diabetes. ➔ Click here our chat schedule.
 - Twitter Handle is @LifescanDI
 - Hashtag is #diabetesinstitute
 - ▶ A Twitter chat geared for people with diabetes is the Diabetes Social Media Advocacy (DSMA) chat held Wednesday evenings 9 – 10 pm ET.
 - The DSMA Twitter handle is @DiabetesSocMed
 - The DSMA hashtag is #DSMA
- **Login to your Twitter account just before the start of the chat.**
- **To follow the dialogue of a Twitter chat, enter the chat's hashtag in the Twitter search field and press enter. This will limit the tweets you see to just those being posted by participants of the Twitter chat.**
 - ▶ You may want to click on the word "Latest" on the tool bar. This helps you continually see the most recent tweets and easily follow the dialogue.
 - ▶ Chats can move fast. You may need to click on "Latest" to refresh the stream of tweets during the chat.
- **When the Twitter chat starts, the host typically asks people to introduce themselves so people involved know who is participating.**
 - ▶ Twitter limits tweets to 280 characters. It's a good idea to develop your introduction and have it ready to post prior to the start of the chat. However, don't feel compelled to introduce yourself. You can lurk and learn.
 - Here's a sample introduction: Hi I'm Hope Warshaw @hopewarshaw, a long time RD, CDE, consultant, author and most important for tonite, host of @LifescanDI Twitter chats for HCPs. I'm pleased you've joined! #diabetesinstitute #diabetes

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- **The host initiates the chat with a question. After there is sufficient dialogue based on the first question, the host will post the next question.**
 - ▶ To make it easier to follow the questions, the host will post his/her questions with a Q (for question) and a number. For example: Q1, Q2 and so on.
 - Here's an example: Q1: How do you integrate and apply the ADA physical activity guidelines into your practice with clients? @LifescanDI #diabetesinstitute
- **Twitter chat participants will start to tweet responses.**
 - ▶ To make it easier to follow responses/answers, the participants will use A (for answers) and a number. For example: A1, A2 and so on.
 - Here's an example: A1: I use the different types of physical activity to teach from and have clients aspire to. They're an evidence-based benchmark for me. #diabetesinstitute
 - ▶ Remember to use the hashtag for the Twitter chat in each of your posts. This is what people will search on both during the chat and afterwards to follow all tweets from the chat.
- **To connect with, get the attention of, reach out to, or have other people see your tweets and other content from the chat, add their Twitter handles in your tweets.**
 - Here's an example: Yes, in diabetes language matters! Be ready to learn why from @janekdickinson, lead author on @aadediabetes and @amdiabetesasn 2017 statement on @LifescanDI webinar.
- **You can find Twitter chat content by searching on the chat's hashtag during or after the chat. Chats are filled with rich conversation and are a great way to share and learn from others.**