Getting Started with T1D

Carb DM

Carb DM’s mission is to build a supportive community that improves the quality of life and health of all those affected by type 1 diabetes. The Carb DM community fosters connections among people with diabetes, their loved ones, and medical professionals; promotes learning; and develops strategies for thriving with diabetes.

In addition to annual symposiums and retreats, Carb DM offers the following programs during the year throughout the Bay Area:

- **Coffee & Carbs**, a gathering for parents and caregivers of children with T1D;
- **Carbs in the Park**, a gathering for families living with T1D;
- **A1 Teens**, outings and gatherings for teens with T1D;
- **Little Carbs**, a playgroup for children under 5 with T1D and their parents;
- **Beer & Basals**, a gathering for adults with T1D;
- **Type 1 Topics**, a speaker series covering a variety of topics relevant to the type 1 community.

For more information and a calendar of events, please visit our website at [www.carbdm.org](http://www.carbdm.org) and join our email list.

**Presentation on “Getting Started with Diabetes”** given by Carb DM Founder Tamar Sofer-Geri: [http://www.ustream.tv/recorded/29936526](http://www.ustream.tv/recorded/29936526)

**General Tips:**

- The diabetes community is the friendliest, most helpful community you can find. Use it!
- Go to diabetes events. It will help you feel normal again.
- Give yourself time. You don’t have to learn it all right away.
- Take breaks! Take time for yourself - you really, really need it and deserve it, now more than ever! Go out by yourself. Diabetes will be still there when you come home.
- Make sure you and your spouse/partner are equal partners in diabetes care. It’s a heavy load that’s easier when shared.
- DON’T listen to what other people say. No one who isn’t living with diabetes understands what life with diabetes is really like.
- DON’T read too much about diabetes. Most of it isn’t relevant to people with type 1 diabetes diagnosed in this day and age who are well managed from the beginning.
Watch Your Language!

How you talk about diabetes can strongly influence how you and your family think and feel about diabetes. So try to avoid some of the common pitfalls:

• Blood sugar checks are “checks” not “tests.” You can’t fail a check.
• There are no “good” or “bad” blood glucose results. It’s all just information. The only “bad” BGs are the ones you don’t know because you didn’t check.
• When they’re high you’re “adjusting,” not correcting. You didn’t make a mistake that you need to “correct.” Your child’s body is doing its thing and sometimes you just need to adjust.
• Remember: You cannot “control” diabetes. All you can hope for is to manage it as best you can.

Seven things to tell others about Juvenile Diabetes (taken from a mother’s blog)

1. Type 1 Diabetes is an autoimmune disease in which the body attacks and destroys all of the cells in the pancreas that produce insulin. No one knows for sure what exactly triggers this autoimmune response, but it is currently not anything that can be prevented and is NOT caused by poor eating, lack of exercise or bad parenting.

2. INSULIN IS NOT A CURE!!! There is currently no proven cure for Type 1 Diabetes. Unlike Type 2 Diabetes (the more commonly discussed type), eating better and exercising won’t reverse it.

3. People with type 1 Diabetes will be dependent on insulin for their entire lives and must take it to survive.

4. Monitoring blood sugar levels is a must! Some people check their children’s blood sugar levels 10 or more times a day.

5. Exercise can cause high blood sugars or low blood sugars – and lows can happen up to 12 hours after exercise.

6. Children with Type 1 Diabetes CAN have things with sugar! In fact, they, like everyone else, need sugars to produce energy. While foods with rapid acting sugars like juice, candy and frostings are to be used sparingly, they can still be had.
7. Parents of children with diabetes NEED other people in their lives to learn how to monitor and care for their children in case there is an emergency or in the rare event they actually have a date night.

**Helpful T1D Resources:**

Carb DM [www.carbdm.org](http://www.carbdm.org)

Carb DM’s online forum: Brave Buddies, a Yahoo group for parents and caregivers of children with T1D: [health.groups.yahoo.com/group/bravebuddies/](http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/bravebuddies/)

Diabetes Youth Families: Diabetes camps for kids and families: [www.dyf.org](http://www.dyf.org)

JDRF [www.jdrf.org](http://www.jdrf.org)

Local Bay Area JDRF chapter [www.jdrfbayarea.org](http://www.jdrfbayarea.org)

**Request the Bag of Hope:** a backpack filled with goodies for kids (primarily Rufus the bear with diabetes) and interesting information for the parents. [http://bayarea.jdrf.org/get-support/bag-of-hope/](http://bayarea.jdrf.org/get-support/bag-of-hope/)

American Diabetes Association [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org)

Children with Diabetes [www.childrenwithdiabetes.com](http://www.childrenwithdiabetes.com)

ABC Diabetics provides diabetes supplies to people with no health insurance or to people who need extra supplies who are willing to make a nominal donation: [www.abcdiabetics.org](http://www.abcdiabetics.org)

Diabetes and Sports Health provide sports camps for children with diabetes [www.dashcamp.org](http://www.dashcamp.org)

Diabetes Hands Foundation’s online community: [www.tudiabetes.org](http://www.tudiabetes.org)


Early Alert Canines: train diabetes alert dogs: [www.earlyalertcanines.org](http://www.earlyalertcanines.org)
Diabetes Device Companies:

Medtronic – Minimed pump and CGM (continuous glucose monitor)  
www.minimeddiabetes.com

Omnipod - patch pump  www.insulet.com

Animas – Ping pump with remote and Vibe pump with integrated DexCom  
www.animascorp.com

Tandem - T-slim touchscreen insulin pump:  www.tandemdiabetes.com

Snap Pump – Customizable pump with pre-filled cartridge:  www.snappump.com

DexCom - CGM  www.dexcom.com

Insulin Companies:

Novolog – fast acting insulin  www.novolog.com

Humalog – fast acting insulin  www.humalog.com/

Apidra – fast acting insulin  www.apidra.com

Lantus – long acting insulin  www.lantus.com

Levemir - long acting insulin  www.levemir.com

Useful diabetes products & supplies:

Shots (these require prescriptions)

• ½ unit syringes—allow for more accurate dosing than the 1 unit syringes.
• Insulin pens—more convenient and portable than syringes and insulin vials. There are reusable ones and disposable ones for Novolog and Humalog and disposable ones for Lantus. Unfortunately, they’re only available with full unit dosing (not ½ units).
• Saline – good for “Shots of Support”. Parents can practice giving themselves shots or take a “shot of support” whenever their child takes a shot. Helpful in comparing the pain

Copyright © 2015 Carb DM, Inc. All Rights Reserved.  
Material can not be reproduced without express written permission.  
www.carbdm.org
in the arm compared to the pain in the stomach; comparing the pain of six units compared to two, etc. Have your child give you a saline shot!

For children having trouble with shots & pump changes:

• **InjectEase** is a device that holds the syringe and somewhat dulls the sensation of the needle. Doctors don’t tell you about it but parents swear by it. Available on Amazon.

• **Buzzy Bee:** [www.buzzy4shots.com](http://www.buzzy4shots.com) is a vibrating device that distracts you from the shot.

• **EMLA:** numbing cream that’s great for pump site insertions. Needs to be put on one hour before the skin is completely numb. Also good for blood draw. (Prescription required.)

• **Glad Wrap Stick and Seal:** Use to cover the EMLA cream. It’s better than IV 3000 or other stickier things because it doesn’t pull on the skin when removing it.

• **Unisolve:** alcohol-swab like wipes that dissolve the sticky stuff from pump sites making them easier to remove.

• **Sensi Care:** spray and wipes for adhesive removal that doesn’t smell of alcohol and doesn’t leave sticky residue like Unisolve does.

Lancets & Meters

• **Accu-Check Fastclix lancing device:** a great lancing device that has a cartridge with six lancets in it. When it’s done, you just replace the cartridge, so you’re never exposed to sharp needles. You can use this lancing device regardless of what glucometer you’re using.

Medical ID bracelets

• **Road ID:** [www.roadid.com](http://www.roadid.com). Offers a similar service to Medic Alert, but you can also just order their ID bracelets without the membership. Try the Wrist ID Slim! These seem to be the most popular.

• **Medic Alert:** [www.medicalert.org](http://www.medicalert.org) Your information is kept on file and the ID bracelet includes your membership number.

• **MediBand:** [www.mediband.com](http://www.mediband.com) A really simple, really cool medical alert band.

• **Lauren’s Hope** [www.laurenshope.com](http://www.laurenshope.com) for fancier designs.

Diabetes bags and packs

• **D-Packs for carrying around the meter, etc.:** There are plenty of diabetes packs online. You can also get one that’s not intended as a diabetes pack. Some suggestions that can be found online:
  - AmeriBag Esopus Microfiber Bag with detachable strap;
  - Baggellini Midtown bag;
  - Overland Placer bag;
LeSportsSac; Manhattan Portage City Lights is a good bag for boys, too. Brett Michael has bags out that should appeal to boys.

- **SPIbelt Pack** [www.spibelt.com](http://www.spibelt.com). For children 9 and younger, order the kids size. 9 and up, order the adult size. Don’t bother ordering the “diabetic belt” - it doesn’t really improve upon the regular belt and it doesn’t have as many colors to choose from.

- **ThighThing** by Unique Accessories for carrying supplies under a dress.

**Cooling (insulin must be kept under 86 degrees but never frozen)**
- **Frio pouches** for keeping insulin cold without refrigeration. Reusable pouches come in a variety of shapes, colors and sizes [www.frioinsulincoolingcase.com](http://www.frioinsulincoolingcase.com)

**For hands-free night time BG checks**
- Try a headlamp such as these: [www.rei.com/search?query=headlamp](http://www.rei.com/search?query=headlamp)
  It may look silly, but it’s really helpful!

**Pump accessories**
- Groovy patches: [www.groovypatches.com](http://www.groovypatches.com)
- Skins: [www.skinit.com](http://www.skinit.com)

**For covering pump sites and CGMs (available from Amazon):**
- Tegaderm - transparent film great for covering pump sites or CGMs.
- Hypafix – cloth mesh available in rolls great for covering pump sites or CGMs. Breathes more than Tegaderm.
- Opsite Flexifix helps to keep sites and sensors on in the water. Just put over IV 3000 or Tegaderm. It comes in rolls and is available online.

**Living the new “normal”**
- **Create Cheat sheets:** Carb counts for frequently eaten foods so you’re not constantly checking the book or looking it up online.
- **Sliding scales:** Carb ratios on one sheet so you don’t have to keep printing them out whenever carb ratios are changed.
- **Cool measuring cups:** Use interesting measuring cups at the table so it doesn’t feel so much like a scientific experiment when serving food. The store Anthropology has some cute geese measuring cups: “Can I have a papa / mama / baby goose of pasta?” There
are measuring cups available that masquerade as nesting dolls – great for sending to school.

- **Round “garage sale” stickers**: Use them to label snack and lunch containers with carb counts. Available at Long’s, Walgreens, Target, Office Depot.
- **Chain restaurants are required to provide nutritional information** so places like Starbucks, Chipotle, California Pizza Kitchen, etc. have carb counts available usually in a binder by the register. They also often include them on their websites.
- Find a diabetic babysitter!
- For some lighthearted humor: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LFIVVHQod5o](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LFIVVHQod5o)

**Good foods to have on hand:**

**For lows:**

- **Sensible sippers** – juice boxes with 7 or 8 g of carb available at Whole Foods.
- **Hansen’s Junior juice boxes** – 4 oz. juice boxes with 15 g of carbs available at Safeway.
- **Marshmallows** – about 6g each.
- **Trader Joe’s All Natural Fruit Jellies** – gummy candies that are fast to eat and only 7 carbs each so good for lows.
- **Gu Chomps**: gummies that have electrolytes and other good stuff to be having while exercising and also carbs so that they’re good for lows while exercising.
- **Shot Bloks**: same as Gu Chomps just by another brand.
- **Sport Beans (by Jelly Belly, but without food coloring or artificial flavoring)**. Same as the Gu Chomps, but more fun.
- **Cliff Gel Shots** – fruit flavors without caffeine (chocolate & coffee flavors contain caffeine) with 24 g of carbs available online and at Whole Foods.
- **Level Glucose Gel** – 15 g fast acting gel in interesting flavors available online.
- **Elovate 15** – single serve powder glucose with 15 g carbs. Available online.
- Many people also use Skittles, jellybeans, Smarties, Butterscotch candies etc.

**Free foods (0 carbs):**

- Beef Jerky
- Cheese sticks
- Seaweed
- Nuts

**“Free” carb snacks (up to 15g of carbs):**

- **NuGii Bars**: gluten free bars protein bars. Individually wrapped 12grams of carbs.
  Available on Amazon.com
• **Mini Kind bars** - available from amazon.com and only 9-13 g of carbs. Great for pre-sports practice or during a game.

• **Crystal Light Pure Fitness**: all natural drink mix that contains 6g of carbs per 16oz of juice. Can be found at Safeway.

• **Extend bars and chips**: are specially formulated to release the glucose slowly to keep blood sugars stable over a period of 9 hours. Good for bedtime snacks especially after a day with a lot of activity. Available at Walgreens and online.
Diabetes books (available on amazon.com)
Diabetes books (available on amazon.com)

Click to LOOK INSIDE!

THE FIGHT TO SURVIVE
BY CAROLINE COX

Click to LOOK INSIDE!

The Sugarless Plum
BY ZEPHORA KORZ