Diabetes Camps: Fun Summer Choices for Kids!

Now is a good time to plan for summer camp. When you think of the warm, sunny days of summer, does it include fond memories of attending summer camp as a kid? Do the memories include activities such as horseback riding, swimming, canoeing, and campfires? Kids with diabetes will enjoy these experiences too!

Diabetes camps are special camps for children with diabetes and provide a camping experience in a safe environment. Diabetes camps give children a chance to meet other children with diabetes and share their experiences while learning to be more personally responsible for their diabetes management. Not all camps have the same activities or sports, and some camps may offer scholarships. For more information, check out some of the Web sites (listed left).

Choosing a Camp

If you are considering enrolling your child in a diabetes camp for summer, now is a good time to start researching camps in your state. Some diabetes camps are sponsored by the American Diabetes Association (ADA). Below are the ADA recommendations for diabetes care at camps:

- Each camper should have a medical form completed by a parent and child's physician.
- The camp medical staff should be led by someone with experience in managing type 1 and type 2 diabetes, and include a diabetes educator, diabetes clinical nurse specialist, and a registered dietitian with expertise in diabetes.
- All camp staff should have background checks to ensure appropriateness in working with children.
- Carefully research camp references and ask about the diabetes-care criteria listed above.

Diabetes camps are a lot of fun. Check out the ADA Web site for a camp nearest you.

- chrisdudley.org/?q=camps-for-diabetes
- galescreekcamp.org/

Oregon
- chrisdudley.org/?q=camps-for-diabetes
- galescreekcamp.org/

Idaho
- hodia.org/
- hdiabetescenter.com/special-events/sweet-kids-day-camp/

Washington
- childrenwithdiabetes.com/camps/d_07_1wa.htm

Spring 2011
Welcome to the first issue of our quarterly diabetes newsletter for parents of children with diabetes. The newsletter offers practical information and tips to help you manage your child’s condition. Our children’s newsletter (enclosed) includes a page for teens and a page for younger children, and contains age-appropriate information and activities.


Did you know?
Have you or your child visited Planet D? It is a great Web site designed just for kids, sponsored by the ADA. It is full of information about diabetes, written with kids in mind, with message boards and information about other kids and teens with diabetes. You son or daughter can become a member and receive e-mails and interesting information about how to better...
Did you know? continued

manage diabetes. Planet D even has a diabetes camp finder! Here is the Web site URL:
diabetes.org/living-with-diabetes/parents-and-kids/planet-d/
The American Diabetes Association also offers a tool kit called The Everyday Wisdom Kit. The kit is designed to help families with type 1 diabetes live with diabetes every day.

• To get more information or sign up for your free kit, go to www.diabetes.com.
• You may also order a kit online from the ADA Web site at http://main.diabetes.org/site/PageServer?pagename=familylink_survey or call: (800) DIABETES (342-2383).

A1C—Another Great Tool for Your Diabetes Management Tool Kit

A hemoglobin A1C (short for HbA1c) test gives you and your child’s healthcare provider good information to help manage diabetes. The test measures the amount of glucose that attaches to the hemoglobin in red blood cells. Hemoglobin is the name for the oxygen-carrying protein in your red blood cells. Glucose in the blood attaches to hemoglobin. The more glucose circulating in the blood stream, the more glucose attaches to the protein in hemoglobin, making hemoglobin “glycated” or fused with glucose. Once glucose is stuck to the hemoglobin, it is attached for the life of the red blood cell, which is about 120 days or four months.

The A1C test gives the average glucose concentration over a 3–4 month period of time. The test results help your child’s healthcare provider and you to know what your child’s glucose levels have been averaging for the last three months. Taken together with your child’s daily glucose meter results, it is an important tool in our diabetes management “tool kit.”

For more information on diabetes management, please refer to the book, The Everything Parent’s Guide to Children with Diabetes by Moria McCarthy and Jake Kushner, M.D. We sent this book to you upon enrolling your child in the diabetes program. If you have not received your copy, or if you would like to speak to one of our program nurses, please call us at (888) 691-8209, ext. 1945, or e-mail conditionmanagement@pacificsource.com.

How A1C Adds Up
The box below shows how A1C translates into average glucose control over time. The ADA recommends age-specific target ranges for kids:

• Under age 6 years: 7.5% to 8.5%
• Age 6–12 years: less than 8%
• Age 13–19 years: less than 7.5%

Your healthcare provider will help you know what is the best target range for your son or daughter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A1C %</th>
<th>eAG estimated average glucose (mg/dL)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>97 (76–120)</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>126 (100–152)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>154 (123–185)</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>183 (147–217)</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>212 (170–249)</td>
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<td>240 (193–282)</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>269 (217–314)</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>298 (240–347)</td>
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Learning to Drive and Type 1 Diabetes

Ask almost any teenager, and they can’t wait to drive. Learning to drive is a rite of passage, and for many, driving represents freedom and independence.

As a teen with type 1 diabetes, however, you face a different kind of challenge when learning to drive. Even though your diabetes might be in excellent control, there is always the chance of a hypoglycemic reaction. You may know what to do when your blood glucose drops too low, but what about when you are behind the wheel? Be aware of the additional dangers involved in becoming hypoglycemic while driving.

Being diabetic may make you feel that it’s not fair to have so much added responsibility. It can be frustrating or awkward when you can’t be as spontaneous as your friends, because you need to check your glucose before getting behind the wheel.

Your friends may not understand the risk, but you know what it feels like to “go low.” The shaky, dizzy, lightheaded feeling and reduced coordination can make driving in traffic extremely dangerous. As the driver, don’t take a chance—be sure to check your glucose.

Quick tips to help you keep safe while driving:

- Test your blood glucose levels before you get into the car. The chances of forgetting to test are much higher once you get behind the wheel.
- If your blood glucose is low, eat a fast glucose snack and test again in 15 minutes.
- Be prepared by keeping a snack or hard candy in the glove box of every car you ride in or drive, in case you go low.
- Always drive with your license and medical ID on you. If an officer stops you and you seem disoriented, they can understand what is going on and offer you some calories.
- If you feel you are going low, pull over to the side of the road and check your glucose. If you are low, eat a snack. You may drive when glucose levels are normal again.
- Carry a small cooler if you drive to school or ride with a friend. Put fruit, snacks, or sports drinks inside.

Did you know?

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It’s important for anyone driving a car to be responsible, accountable, and mature. Checking for hypoglycemia, before driving, is just one of the many responsibilities that go along with driving for anyone living with diabetes.

For more information, check out the following publications:

- U.S. Dept. of Transportation Brochure: Driving When You Have Diabetes nhtsa.gov/people/injury/olddrive/Diabetes%20Web/index.html
Fun Snacks to Make and Eat!

Peel a banana and dip it in yogurt, and then roll it in crushed cereal and freeze.

Make your own gorp. Mix together cereal, dried fruit, and nuts in a plastic sandwich bag for an on-the-go snack.

Make snack kabobs. Put cubes of cheese and grapes on pretzel sticks.

Smear a scoop of frozen yogurt on a graham cracker and add sliced banana. Top with another cracker for a yummy sandwich.

Hold a Family Snack-off!

Have ideas for gorp or other snacks? Try a few ideas and hold a family snack competition.

Diabetes Quick Quiz

If you were diagnosed with type 1 diabetes at the age of 5, by the time you are 18, you will have poked your finger about 18,980 times. Wow! That is a lot of finger pokes!

How many finger pokes have you had? Multiply your average number of daily finger pokes by the number of days in a year (365), and then multiply that number by the number of years you have been checking your glucose.

__ checks per day __ X 365 X __ years = __ total number of pokes

What will you do on summer vacation?

Roll a die (or flip a coin to move one or two spaces). Move your token, such as a piece of cereal, along the path to the finish.

Did you know?

Outdoor exercise can make you feel good! Have you been feeling restless or a little down? Go outside! Just five minutes of outdoor fun can make you happy and give you a good feeling about yourself. There are lots of activities to choose from. Here are a few ideas: hike, take pictures, canoe, surf, ski, ride horses, fish, climb a tree, snowboard, skateboard, fly a kite, catch bugs, blow bubbles, shoot some hoops, practice your soccer kicks, ride your bike, build a fort.

Any other ideas? Write them here:

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Check Checkup

Does someone help you check?
If you check on your own, is it easier now than when you first started checking?
Learn more about checking your glucose! Visit the Plant D Web site. See “Did you Know?” on the back of this page.

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PacificSource Diabetes Newsletter for Kids and Teens