It is not too early or too late to start thinking about diabetes camp for your child this summer. For those kids who attend diabetes camp, it is a truly unique experience. It might be the only place where kids with diabetes are in the majority.

Catherine Marschilok, a mom and Nurse Diabetes Educator, shares her own son’s experience at Joslin Diabetes Camp:

“What’s so special about diabetes camp is the wordless understanding, the knowledge born of experience that everyone with diabetes has to jump out of the game of life to do some annoying task of taking care of diabetes. At Joslin, and so many other wonderful diabetes camps around the country, the kid with diabetes does not take that step out of the game alone to treat a low. He steps out with support and a band of brothers behind him. And the player in the game does not worry about letting his teammates down or that once his blood sugar is back up, there won’t be room for him in the game.”

Read her story at jdrf.org/2008/12/ask-a-medical-professional-diabetes-camp.

Diabetes Summer Camps

Besides all of the activities, diabetes camps offer so much more to kids living with diabetes. Because all of the kids and counselors share this condition, your child will learn he or she is not the only one with diabetes. Camp is where many kids learn to give themselves shots for the first time or use a pump by themselves. They also see others who live happy, healthy lives with diabetes. Many of the medical staff, older campers, and counselors lead by example and help teach younger campers to live well with diabetes. Kids will learn there are a lot of other kids just like them. It usually is a very empowering experience.

Although camps charge tuition, many offer partial or full scholarships.

Find Our Newsletter Online!
Find this and past issues of our Counterbalance newsletter, as well as links to resources on our website. Simply visit PacificSource.com/juvenile-diabetes.

Questions?
If you would like to speak with a Registered Nurse at PacificSource about diabetes or any other health-related question or issue, please call (888) 987-5805 and ask for Sheila.
Taking Care of Your Vision with Diabetes

When you were diagnosed with diabetes, you probably were told that annual eye exams are important. But did you know why? Here's a quick review of what can happen inside the eyes over time when living with diabetes.

Diabetic eye disease refers to a group of eye problems that people with diabetes may face as a complication of higher blood sugar levels.

Poorly controlled or continuously elevated blood glucose can lead to small-blood-vessel damage. And the eyes have a lot of small blood vessels. “The longer you’ve had diabetes and the higher your blood sugars range on a regular basis, the more likely you are to eventually have eye disease, or diabetic retinopathy,” explains Emily Chew, the deputy clinical director of the National Eye Institute in Bethesda, Maryland.

Diabetic eye problems may include:

- Diabetic retinopathy—damage to the blood vessels in the retina.
- Cataract—clouding of the eye’s lens. Cataracts can develop at an earlier age in people with diabetes.
- Glaucoma—increase in fluid pressure inside the eye that leads to optic nerve damage and loss of vision. A person with poorly controlled blood glucose levels is nearly twice as likely to get glaucoma as people without diabetes.
- Macular edema—damage to the area in the eye for focusing by leakage of blood vessels

Diabetic retinopathy and diabetic macular edema often have no symptoms in their early stages. The macula is a small area in the back of the eye or retina that is responsible for detailed central vision. It is the area which allows you to read, sew, or recognize a face. The macula does not function properly when it is swollen from leaking fluids, which is a side effect of diabetic retinopathy.

Annual eye exams increase the chances that your child’s doctor will detect these conditions as soon as possible and treat them when necessary. Be sure to schedule a yearly eye exam.

One of the best things you can do is to help your child keep up with in-range blood sugar control.

For more detailed information visit the National Eye Institute website: nei.nih.gov/health/diabetic/retinopathy.

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Find Diabetes Camps Online

**Idaho**
- Hodia.org

**Montana**
- Diabetes.org/in-my-community/diabetes-camp/camps/montana.html

**Oregon**
- ChrisDudley.org/?q=camps-for-diabetes
- CampTamarack.com/summer-camp
- GalesCreekCamp.org

**Washington**
- CampLeo.org
- CampStix.org

**Everywhere:**
- DiabetesCamps.org/camp-finder/sessions
The New Medical ID Bracelets: Smart and Stylish!

Smart
If you use insulin, consider wearing a medical identification (ID) bracelet, especially if you play sports. No one plans to have a medical emergency, but it’s a good idea to be prepared for one. Medical ID bracelets are an excellent way to expedite treatment and avoid misdiagnosis during an emergency. Paramedics are trained to look for medical ID bracelets.

Both high and low blood sugar can lead to unconsciousness, coma, seizures, and death. If emergency care personnel need to look through your wallet or purse for a medical ID, treatment may be delayed. And if a person is behaving oddly or has lost consciousness, bystanders are more likely to call for help if they recognize that the problem is medical, rather than related to drugs or alcohol.

Stylish
If you have an ID bracelet, but have not worn it for a long time, it may be time for an upgrade! Medical ID bracelets don’t have to be ugly. Many attractive options exist for young men and women. Check at your local pharmacy, or do an online search for medical ID bracelets. You might be surprised by all of the options available!

Here are a couple of related links with some good, attractive options:
- Lauren’s Hope: laurenshope.com

Cheesy Pear Sandwiches
One small pear will make two sandwiches.

Ingredients
2 slices cinnamon-swirl raisin bread
4 tablespoons cream cheese
1 small pear, cored and thinly sliced
(Ask an adult to help you slice the pear.)

Directions
Toast the bread. Spread 2 tablespoons of cream cheese on each slice. Top the cream cheese with slices of pear. Dive in right away!

Nutritional Facts
Serving size: 1 sandwich
Per serving: calories 200, total fat 2 g, (saturated fat 0 g, trans fat 0 g), cholesterol 3 mg, sodium 188 mg, total carbohydrates 22 g (fiber 2 g, sugar 10 g), protein 5 g.
POWER SNACK

A healthful energy boost after school! The recipe makes about 2 cups (6 servings).

**Ingredients**
- 1 cup multigrain “O” cereal, such as Cheerios®
- ¾ cup almonds, dry roasted or raw
- 3 tablespoons mini chocolate chips
- 1/3 cup dried cherries
  (or other chopped, dried fruit, such as apricots, peaches, or apples)

**Directions**
Mix all ingredients together in a medium-sized bowl.
Store the mix in a jar with a tight lid to keep it fresh.

**Nutritional Facts**
Serving size: 1/3 cup
Per serving: calories 165, total carbohydrates 17 g,
protein 4 g, total fat 10 g.

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**Did you know?**
Almonds come from trees, but they really aren’t nuts.

**Do you know what almonds are?**
Find the answer at the bottom of this page.

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**Bees in the Trees**
It’s spring and the trees are in bloom. All the bees love flowers and help spread the flower pollen. And that helps the trees grow more fruit.

Not all our bees are the same. **Can you find five busy bees that are different?**