

June 2009

## Tips for keeping diabetes under control during summer break

Summer break can present many challenges for kids with diabetes and their parents. A lot of different things can make blood sugar numbers bouncy or raise A1c. The biggest cause of bouncy numbers is not following a consistent routine. Other causes of bouncy numbers and increased A1c include:

- Reduced activity.
- More snacking – sometimes without adults' knowledge.
- More sedentary activities like watching TV, using computers and playing video games.
- Changes in sleep schedules. Kids may stay up later at night and sleep later in the morning.
- Less supervision of diabetes cares.
- Exposure of insulin to heat and humidity.

To help stay in diabetes control during summer break:

- Develop a routine and stick to it.
- Set a bedtime and wake-up time and stick to it at least four or five days a week.
- Exercise every day.
- Plan ahead whenever possible.
- Have a plan to avoid eating out of boredom.

Parents can help their kids stay in diabetes control during summer break by:

- Helping kids set a summer routine.
- Helping kids stick to their routine (give reminders, use a calendar, etc.).
- Supervising diabetes cares whenever possible, especially injections. Remember that most kids have a school staff member supervising and overseeing their care plan during the school year.
- Paying close attention to their child's blood sugars and averages and be ready to help make insulin adjustments in their doses if needed.

Kids with diabetes can have a hard time preventing low blood sugars during the summer. The longer the days are, the more activity your child can pack into one day!

**Remember:** The more active your child is, the less insulin is needed. Exercise helps your child's body burn carbohydrates faster and use insulin easier.

Summer weather also can affect blood sugars and insulin needs. Hot weather and humidity can cause your body to burn carbohydrates faster and use insulin easier. In addition, many signs of dehydration and heat exposure are the same as hypoglycemia symptoms, making it more difficult to recognize low blood sugar reactions.

Avoid low blood sugar reactions by:

- Taking your blood sugar meter with you everywhere.
- Checking your blood sugar often. Check at least before, during and after new activities and on really warm or humid days.
- Carrying a fast-acting sugar source with you at all times to treat lows.
- Drinking water! Remember, people with diabetes get dehydrated three times faster than people without diabetes.

Parents can help kids avoid low blood sugar reactions during summer break by:

- Paying close attention to your child's blood sugars.
- Making changes to your child's insulin doses if needed.

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## Summer camps: Are you and your child ready?

Often children with diabetes feel like nobody understands how they feel or know what it's like to live every day with diabetes. A diabetes camp may give your child the chance to escape feelings of being different and simply have fun. Your child will meet and learn from other kids and adult counselors with diabetes who:

- Listen to your child and understand firsthand what it's like to live with diabetes.
- Share their tips for living with diabetes and their day-to-day triumphs and challenges.
- Inspire your child with their accomplishments at school, in sports and at work.
- Help your child make new friends.
- Help your child develop skills toward diabetes independence and finding lifelong support systems.

If your child with diabetes wants to attend other camps, here are some things to consider when choosing a camp:

- What type of camp does your child want to attend? There are residential, day, sports, religious, secular, same-gender and co-ed camps.
- How much attention will your child get? If the director or staff is too busy to return your phone calls or talk at length with you prior to the camp, this should be a red flag that the camp staff may be too busy to care safely for your child.
- Does the camp have medical staff on site? Will your child be responsible for his or her diabetes cares? Will there be supervision of diabetes cares? Make sure you have these answers before you sign your child up for camp.
- What is the camp like? Ask others who have attended but also interview the director/staff. Questions to ask include:

What is the camp philosophy? What is the age and background of the camping staff? How is the staff trained? What is the percentage of staff members who return each year? What medical facilities does the camp use? What is the satisfaction level of previous campers? What is the food like? What is the policy on phone calls and family visits?

### Preparation is key

Just like a school plan, it is important that you provide written diabetes care orders for the camp staff. The camp should identify a staff member who will supervise or be responsible for your child's diabetes cares. To ensure a safe and fun camp experience, be sure to communicate your child's needs and routines to that staff member and address all questions and concerns before your child arrives at camp.

Diabetes care supplies to provide camp:

1. The blood glucose meter currently in use, plus a backup meter.
2. Twice as much insulin as you would normally use for this length of time.
3. Twice as many test strips as you would normally use.
4. Twice as many pen needle caps/syringes.
5. Twice as many ketone test strips.
6. A glucagon kit.
7. Glucose tabs, candy, juice or fast-acting carbohydrate sources for treating low blood glucose.
8. A container for safe disposal of sharps.

Be sure to fill out and send in physician authorization forms for camp as soon as you receive them. Allow three to five business days for the diabetes staff to review and sign camp forms. **D**

## Why do I need to see a dietitian in Diabetes Clinic?

Dietitians are trained in:

- Promoting healthy eating habits.
- Encouraging good nutrition.

The dietitians in the Diabetes Clinic at Children's Hospital of Wisconsin specialize in teaching families how food plays an important role in blood sugar control and growth.

A lot of health information that you get outside of clinic can be confusing, and sometimes it's even harmful to you. Dietitians can tell you whether nutrition advice is good or bad. They are trained to give nutrition and food advice that is based on research and proven to work.

Whether you are trying to lose weight, build muscle, improve your blood sugar numbers or choose the best snack, ask your dietitian. Your dietitian can help you set and achieve goals and give you information on:

- How well you are growing.
- If you are at a healthy weight.
- How to choose foods that help control your blood sugars.
- How much food is healthy for you to eat.
- How to get the best nutrition out of your daily food choices.
- If/when you need a vitamin or mineral supplement.
- How to gain or lose weight.
- How to fit parties, holidays and other events that offer food into your life. **D**

### What is a registered dietitian?

A registered dietitian is a food and nutrition expert who has earned a bachelor of science degree, completed an internship, passed a national board exam and earned credentialing.

Your diabetes dietitian team includes:

- Jenny Allen, RD, CD
- Kelly Maglio, RD, CD, CDE
- Laura Perdue, RD, CD
- Amber Smith, RD, CD

## Start thinking about 2009-2010 school year now

School plan (IHP) mailing: You should receive a form for your child's school plan in mid-July. Please fill out as much information as you can before you come to clinic. If you have a follow-up Diabetes Clinic visit in summer 2009, bring your IHP to your visit and ask to have it reviewed for the 2009-2010 school year.

School plan walk-in sessions: If your child does not have a follow-up Diabetes Clinic visit scheduled before the 2009-2010 school year, come to a school plan walk-in session to have the school plan reviewed and signed. Dates and times will be included in the July school plan mailing. **D**

## Fox Valley Clinic updates

### Fox Valley Diabetes Clinic expands

St. Vincent Hospital in Green Bay, Wis., closed its Pediatric Diabetes and Endocrine Clinic in November 2008. Patients who were receiving care in Green Bay now can receive care at Children's Hospital of Wisconsin Clinics-Fox Valley in Neenah. Children's Hospital-Fox Valley added more pediatric endocrinologists and support staff to accommodate more patients. Clinic days in Neenah also have increased from 12 to 32 per year. The following physicians see patients in the Fox Valley clinic:

- Ramin Alemzadeh, MD.
- Omar Ali, MD.
- Patricia Donohue, MD.
- Alvina Kansra, MD.
- Paola Palma-Sisto, MD.
- David Wyatt, MD.

Shari Liesch, MSN, RN, CDE, APNP, also has increased her availability at the Fox Valley clinic.

Appointments are available Monday mornings, all day Tuesdays and Wednesday mornings.

### Education program is recognized

The diabetes education program at Children's Hospital of Wisconsin Clinics-Fox Valley has been awarded recognition from the American Diabetes Association. This recognition means that the education program meets the national standards for diabetes self-management education programs.

### Welcome new staff

The Fox Valley Diabetes program welcomes the following new staff to the program:

- Tracy Buksyk, RN.
- Lainie Hintz, RD. Lainie had provided nutrition education services to the program as a consultant. Lainie sees patients in the clinic and will continue to teach Day 3 and Self - Management 1 classes.
- Angelica Gronke, RD, is a dietitian at Theda Clark Medical Center who will provide nutrition screening and assessment to Diabetes Clinic patients as needed.
- Jennie Woreck, MSSW, joined the Fox Valley clinic as a part-time social worker. Jennie also works with the Northeast Regional Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs in Neenah, Wis.

### School Program

The School Program offers diabetes care training for school and day care staff. The next session will be held in August and October. Please contact the Fox Valley clinic at one of the numbers below for more information. **D**

### Contact information for the Fox Valley Diabetes Program

Clinic front desk: (920) 969-7970  
Diabetes voice mail: (920) 969-5390  
Clinic fax: (920) 969-7979

## Tips for staying in diabetes control during summer break, continued

- Making up a travel bag for your child and insisting that it goes with them everywhere. Check the bag and, if needed, restock it every day. Include:
  - A blood sugar meter and test strips.
  - A supply of fast-acting sugar.
  - A glucagon kit.
  - Emergency contact information.

Plan ahead for intense activities or special events like:

- Camping.
- Amusement parks.
- Swimming.

Make sure your child is wearing a medical alert ID at all times. By planning ahead, you and your child can have a safe and fun summer! **D**

# Diabetes Dialog

The Diabetes Clinic at Children's Hospital of Wisconsin is one of the largest in the country, serving more than 1,700 children with diabetes. We offer:

- Full consultative service for both inpatient and outpatient settings.
- Comprehensive diabetes education program, including advanced self-management.
- Behavioral health services.
- 24-hour phone availability.
- School support program.
- Outpatient insulin pump program.

For more information about the Diabetes Program at Children's Hospital, visit [www.chw.org/diabetes](http://www.chw.org/diabetes).

For an appointment, call (414) 607-5280  
or toll-free (877) 607-5280.

## Rising tide of overweight and obese children and teens with type 1 diabetes

In the United States, obesity has reached its highest numbers ever. The incidence of overweight and obese children and teens with type 1 diabetes has tripled in the past 20 years. This increase is similar to the increase of overweight and obesity that is being seen in the general population. Overweight and obesity is affecting all ages, races and income levels. One way the medical team looks at weight is using the body mass index. BMI is a measure of weight to height, taking age and gender into account.

**Overweight:** BMI equal to or greater than 85th percentile.

**Obesity:** BMI equal to or greater than 95th percentile.

The increase in numbers of overweight and obese children and teens is very concerning because it can cause a number of complications, including insulin resistance. Insulin resistance makes it harder for the body to respond to the recommended dose of insulin. This results in higher blood sugars, more insulin needed and more weight gain. Other complications

related to overweight and obesity include high blood pressure, high cholesterol and high triglycerides, higher risk of type 2 diabetes, early onset heart disease and poor menstrual function in adolescent girls.

In order to help keep children and adolescents with diabetes healthy, each diabetes visit includes:

1. Measurement of weight and height.
2. BMI calculation.
3. Plotting of weight, height and BMI on your child's or teen's growth chart.
4. Discussion of concerns regarding BMI and physical activity, including how it will impact future diabetes complications.
5. Patient and family goal setting for nutrition and lifestyle changes that could be made to improve overall health.

Our goal is to help prevent overweight and obesity for all of our patients and to help decrease the risk of long-term medical complications. Please discuss any concerns you have with any of your diabetes care providers. **D**