



How do I fit diabetes into my life?

Going out
with friends

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**changing
diabetes®**

At Novo Nordisk, we are changing diabetes.
In our approach to developing treatments,
in our commitment to operate profitably and
ethically and in our search for a cure.



With you all the way is a patient support programme created by Novo Nordisk, providing practical information on diabetes and its management for children and young adults with diabetes.

This material has been reviewed by a panel of experts:

- Lead Diabetes Specialist Nurse – Nicola Lewis, UK
- Paediatric Endocrinologists – Prof Thomas Danne, Germany and Dr Nandu Thalange, UK



This information is not designed to replace the advice of a healthcare professional. Please consult your doctor or nurse if you have any questions or concerns about managing your diabetes.



Going out

As you get older, it is only natural that you will want to go out and enjoy yourself with your friends.

Managing your diabetes and your social life can sometimes require careful planning. It is important that you try to keep track of your diabetes and manage it appropriately when you are out and about.

We hope this leaflet answers some of the questions you may have about fitting diabetes into your life.

If you have any other questions about diabetes, speak to your doctor or nurse.

Alcohol

When you are old enough, you and your friends may start to experiment with alcohol. It is important that you are aware of the effects of alcohol on your body and look after yourself so you don't put yourself in danger.

Potential effects of alcohol:¹

Alcohol can increase the risk of hypoglycaemia – particularly the night after drinking (however, blood glucose levels will initially rise).

- Drinking too much can impair your ability to recognise and manage hypoglycaemia
- Alcohol can mask the symptoms of hypoglycaemia – people may think you have had too much to drink when you are actually suffering from severe hypoglycaemia
- When you have been drinking you may forget to take your insulin or forget to eat before you go to bed

If you do drink:¹

- Try to drink in moderation
- Make sure that close friends know about your diabetes, how to recognise signs of hypoglycaemia and how to manage hypoglycaemia
- Eat carbohydrates before drinking, every couple of hours while you are drinking and before you go to sleep
- Try to have a non-alcoholic drink in between each alcoholic one
- Try to choose drinks which are low in alcohol rather than low in carbohydrates
- Carry hypoglycaemia treatment, testing supplies and insulin with you at all times when you are out
- Remember to test your blood glucose levels, particularly before you go to bed and when you wake up in the morning – and continue to check the next day
- Discuss with your doctor or nurse how you should adjust your insulin when you go out, particularly if you will be very active e.g. dancing
- Remember to take your insulin at the normal time
- Carry some form of diabetes identification in case people think you have had too much to drink when you actually have hypoglycaemia

Smoking

Smoking is bad for your health, whether you have diabetes or not. But in people with diabetes, smoking increases the risk of future complications such as heart disease and foot disease.²

Smoking can also increase blood glucose levels, as tobacco causes insulin resistance and stimulates stress hormones.¹

Reasons not to smoke²

- Smoking causes cancer and other diseases
- Smelling of smoke isn't attractive
- Who wants to kiss someone who tastes like an ashtray?
- Smoking makes you more likely to catch colds and get chest infections
- It's not only your health you are putting at risk – passive smoking is bad for people around you
- Cigarettes are expensive
- Smoking won't make you thin

Other activities

If you are planning activities when you go out, such as bowling, skateboarding or playing sports, you may need to have a snack or adjust your insulin dose. Remember that low blood glucose levels may also occur several hours after activity.

Make sure you have everything you need to manage your diabetes with you in case you have hypoglycaemia or hyperglycaemia while you are out.

See the '[How do I stay healthy?](#)' information leaflet for more information.

Parties

Having diabetes doesn't mean you can't go to parties and enjoy yourself.

You can still eat party food, as long as you monitor your blood glucose levels and adjust your insulin if necessary. If there is alcohol at the party, try and drink in moderation and eat snacks regularly (see page 3).

You should test your blood glucose after the party and again at bedtime to check your levels. You may need to adjust your insulin dose to help keep the balance.³





Sleepovers

When you stay over at a friend's house you will need to plan ahead. You should make sure you have everything you need to manage your diabetes.

You should tell the people you are staying with about your diabetes and how to manage hypoglycaemia if this occurs.³ If you need any help with testing your blood or injecting your insulin, your friend's parents may need to be shown what to do.³

Dealing with parents

Your parents may worry about you going out with friends and staying out late. They are not trying to make your life difficult, they do it because they care.

- Try to understand their point of view – let them know where you are and what time you will be back (and let them know if your plans change!)
- Reassure them that you can manage your diabetes away from home
- Make sure that you take all the supplies you need to manage your diabetes whilst you are out

Pregnancy

Women with diabetes can have children like women without diabetes. However, to ensure that your child develops healthily you should try to achieve the best possible control before becoming pregnant.

Always talk to your doctor or nurse for advice prior to trying to conceive.



References

1. Better Health Channel. Diabetes – issues for children and teenagers. Factsheet. Available at: [www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcv2.nsf/ByPDF/Diabetes_issues_for_children_and_teenagers/\\$File/Diabetes_issues_for_children_and_teenagers.pdf](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcv2.nsf/ByPDF/Diabetes_issues_for_children_and_teenagers/$File/Diabetes_issues_for_children_and_teenagers.pdf) Accessed October 2012.
2. Diabetes UK website. My life (Teens). Available at: www.diabetes.org.uk/Guide-to-diabetes/My-life/Teens/ Accessed October 2012.
3. Diabetes UK website. My life (Kids). Available at: www.diabetes.org.uk/Guide-to-diabetes/My-life/Kids/ Accessed October 2012.
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About Novo Nordisk

This information was developed by Novo Nordisk, a global healthcare company specialising in the care of people with diabetes.

Novo Nordisk was started up almost 90 years ago by a Danish couple with a passion for changing diabetes. August Krogh was a professor at the University of Copenhagen and Nobel Prize winner and his wife Marie, a doctor and researcher into metabolic diseases, suffered from type 2 diabetes. They learned of insulin being developed in Canada and were determined to ensure access to insulin for everyone with diabetes, and hence in 1923 Novo Nordisk was born.

Since then Novo Nordisk has grown to become a world leader in the provision of diabetes products and support for patients of all ages.⁴

We fully understand the challenges that children with diabetes face and are working together with parents, schools and healthcare professionals to improve the care of children with diabetes, as they grow up and develop.

For more information about Novo Nordisk, please visit: www.novonordisk.com



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