

School Camps

Information for Young People

Having diabetes doesn't mean you can't go on school camps. Camps are a great opportunity to be with your friends and have some fun.

To attend a school camp you need to be able to draw-up, dial up or deliver an accurate dose of insulin. If you are taking injections you need to be able to inject yourself. If you are on an insulin pump you will need to be able to re-site an infusion set. You will also need to be able to test your blood glucose levels (BGL's).

If you can't do these things, then you won't be able to go. That is unless your mum or dad, a school nurse or a teacher's aide (who has been trained in giving injections or looking after insulin pumps) is also going to the camp. So it is much better for you to be able to look after your own diabetes.

Planning is the key to having a great time at camp. Here are some tips that will help you look after your diabetes while you are at camp.

- Even if you are able to look after your diabetes by yourself it is a good idea for someone else to know something about diabetes, in case there is a problem at camp. Usually this is your teacher or a teacher's aide.
- Some school camps allow you to phone home when needed to discuss BGL's and insulin doses. It is a good idea for you to organise this with the school before you go. If you are allowed to take a mobile phone to stay in touch then make sure the phone will work at the camp site. You will need to check with the school to make sure they are happy for you to use a mobile phone at camp.
- Some camps plan exercise and sport at times that you are not used to e.g. a run or hike before breakfast. So that you can plan for these situations and know what to do, it is a good idea to get a copy of the activity program and the food menu before you go.
- Your diabetes doctor or educator will be able to help you plan for the activities and check to see if there is enough carbohydrate at all the meals. So make an appointment a few weeks before the camp.
- It is a good idea for your teachers or other carers who are attending camp to have written instructions on how your diabetes should be managed. This will avoid any confusion.
- The written guidelines must include information on what to do if you get sick or if there is an emergency.
- It is important that you take enough supplies (insulin, syringes, pen needles, 'hypo' food, infusion sets, ketone strips etc.) with you to last until the end of the camp.

Visit the Sweet Transition website at www.sweet.org.au

Exercise and Hypoglycaemia Prevention for Camp

To ensure that you can join in all the activities without having heaps of 'hypo's', the following is recommended:

- Your insulin dose should be cut back before you go to camp. You will need less insulin if you are doing a lot of exercise. This will reduce the risk of hypoglycaemia. Your diabetes doctor or educator will be able to help you with this when you go for your appointment.
- In the written plan for the teachers or carer, there must be information on how to manage 'hypo's' in case you are so 'low' that you can't treat it by yourself.

General Safety Issues

- While sleeping on the top bunk is fun, it is probably better if you sleep on a lower bunk (it makes it easier if you need to get up to treat a 'hypo' during the night)
- It is really important to do a BGL before you go to bed **every** night while you are at camp. You need to know what to do if your level is low. Your diabetes doctor or educator will discuss this with you at your appointment. Usually the BGL before bed at camp should be above 7mmol/L.
- You must have an emergency supply of 'hypo' food (e.g lucozade®, glucose tablets, jelly beans) in case of a 'hypo' during the night.
- It is a good idea to keep your BG monitor, a torch and your 'hypo' food under your bed or bunk so you will know where everything is if you have a 'hypo' in the middle of the night.
- If you are having injections and you don't want to inject in front of your friends, ask your teacher if there is somewhere you can go to do this in private.
- You need to have a safe way of disposing of any sharps (syringes and needles), so take a sharps container with you.
- Always carry some 'hypo' food with you at all times.

Diabetes Camps

Did you know that there are some great camps run for young people with diabetes? Diabetes camps are one of the best experiences that a young person with diabetes can have. They are also a great place to learn more about diabetes, improve your self-confidence and independence and simply have a great time. If you want to know more about diabetes camps in Queensland go to www.campdiabetes.com.au .