

It's inevitable. There will come a day when your teenager leaves your home to go college or moves out to start a job. For many parents, this is a frightening thought. Now add in the fact that your child has Type 1 Diabetes. You may have all sorts of questions: Who is going to take care of him when he goes low at night? Will she remember to order supplies in time? Will he check his blood glucose before he gets in the car to drive? It's natural to be concerned. As parents, it's our job to empower our children and make sure they have the skills and tools to live independently.

Prepare and Empower

So what can you do to prepare your child for this major life transition?

- **Plan for it:** Start the transition process at least a year ahead of when you expect your child to leave your home.
- **Help them identify a new doctor:** Your child will need to find an endocrinologist that works with adults. Some pediatric practices will see young adults with type 1 diabetes through the age of 26, others will ask your child to transition to adult care at 18. Find out in advance so you are not caught off guard and can plan ahead.
- **Encourage shared responsibility:** When it comes to making appointments, ordering supplies, analyzing blood glucose values, ensure your child has practiced these skills before leaving your home. The National Diabetes Education Program (NDEP) provides a [Pediatric to Adult Diabetes Care: Transition Planning Checklist](#) so of the items to cover.
- **Help them figure out who they should tell about diabetes:** Even though this may be a time they want to redefine themselves without the label of having type 1 diabetes, it's important that people in their life know. Talk to them about having "the talk" with their roommate, friends, professors, employers, etc.
- **Encourage healthy behaviors:** This may be the first time they are solely responsible for what they eat. Talk to them about the importance of proper nutrition, exercise and stress and their effect on blood sugars.
- **Have the tough conversations:** Alcohol, drugs, driving, sex, eating disorders, anxiety, and depression. Encourage an open and honest dialogue about how to stay safe and share resources they may need.
- **Insurance:** Make decisions about health insurance plans and ensure they know who to call when they need help.

Helping your child transition to adulthood when it come to their diabetes can be difficult and stressful. Talk with your child's doctor about how he can best prepare you and your child for success.

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Disclaimer: This document is not intended to take the place of the care and attention of your personal physician or other professional medical services. Our aim is to promote active participation in your care and treatment by providing information and education. Questions about individual health concerns or specific treatment options should be discussed with your physician.

Sources

[Transition of Diabetes Care from Pediatrics to Adulthood: Preventing the Freefall.](#)