Diabetes is easier to manage with a set schedule. If you eat the same foods at the same time every day, things won't be perfect, but they will be simpler. However, if you are a typical teen who likes to hang out with friends on the weekends, goes out to eat, or has snacks during after school activities, having a set routine can be tough. You will have to make some choices about what to eat and how to handle your diabetes.

Meals Away from Home

When eating out, plan in advance so you can take care of your diabetes with as little interruption to socializing as possible.

- Do your research: It may be more difficult to correctly count the carbohydrates in a meal when eating out. Before you head out, check out the nutritional information on the restaurant's website. This will take out some of the guesswork of figuring out the carbs for your meal once you are with your friends.
- If you need privacy, take it! If you are someone who doesn't like to handle diabetes care publicly, head to the restroom after you order to make sure your insulin injection/pump bolus gets done.
- Take care of diabetes right away. It can be easy to forget about diabetes when you are out having fun with friends. Handle checking blood glucose and giving insulin up front, so you can get on to the more important task of having fun.

Snacking and Grazing

You might be attending a theater rehearsal, waiting for your event at a swim meet, or at a math team event. You might be at your friend's house gaming or hanging out after school. In all of these places, there are snacks, and many teenagers like to graze. Food is part of our social life. Again, plan ahead. When you see what snacks are available, choose what you are going to eat, put it on a plate, take insulin for it and eat it. Try to avoid snacking over the span of a couple of hours, as this can lead to persistent highs.

When Your Numbers Aren't What You Expected

Imagine you're out to eat with friends and you want to order a high carb meal or snack. You check your blood glucose and it's high. You'll have to decide what to do next. Even though you want to dig in, a better plan is to give a correction dose and order a low carb option. While that may be disappointing, your glucose may be back closer to target when it's time for dessert. If you are at a coffee shop, you may find that ordering something sugar free or low-carb may still be a good treat.

Sometimes going out to eat with friends is less about the food and more about the friendships. With a little preparation and strong decision-making, you can take care of your diabetes and still enjoy your time with friends.

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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.

Recommended

Exercise

Diabetes Burnout

No Exceptions

Building a Support Network

Sources

The 5 Most Common Party Foods and What It Means for Blood Sugar Management – Beyond Type 1

What to Eat – Beyond Type 1

Food – Eat Right