

Resources for building resilience

Your ability to overcome challenges and rebuild a positive self-image (self-esteem, identity, your image of yourself and your body) is called resilience. Everyone’s response to a diagnosis of type 1 diabetes is different.

Here are some resources to help you build resilience and move towards acceptance of your diabetes:

Personal

- Capitalize on your strengths (humour, organizational skills, creativity, etc.).
- Take a step back to change your perspective.
- Believe in your abilities.
- Set realistic and achievable goals.
- Accept that some days are more difficult than others—and it’s not your fault.
- Find ways to manage your stress.
- Increase your knowledge of the disease.
- Inform the people around you.

External

- Appeal to your social network (family, friends, colleagues).
- Consult with the health professionals on your healthcare team.
- Contact diabetes organizations.

Technological

- Use smartphone apps to help you manage your diabetes;
- Monitor your blood glucose with continuous glucose monitoring;
- Talk to your doctor about insulin pumps.

One day at a time.
One goal at a time!

Resources

Camp Carowanis
diabete-enfants.ca/
camp-carowanis

Camp pour enfants
diabétiques de l’est
du Québec
cedeq.org

Juvenile Diabetes
Research Foundation
jdrf.ca

Fondation ressources
pour les enfants
diabétiques
diabete-enfants.ca

Ordre des
psychologues
du Québec
ordrepsy.qc.ca

The BETTER project
type1better.com



Life’s brighter under the sun

This educational tool was produced with the support of Sun Life, which is committed to preventing diabetes.

Questions about diabetes?

InfoDiabetes Service
514-259-3422
1-800-361-3504
infodiabete@diabete.qc.ca



Learning to live with type 1 diabetes
Towards a new normal



Whether your diabetes diagnosis is recent or not, one fact remains: you will have to learn to live with this disease since it cannot be cured.

Type 1 diabetes affects all aspects of your life. It forces you to mourn the loss of the image you had of yourself and your health. It also forces you to change certain behaviours forever. All this can generate a lot of emotion, and **that’s perfectly normal.**

Here is a tool to help you move forward towards acceptance of your type 1 diabetes. Coming to terms with this new reality in your life will help you regain some control over your health, which will motivate you to actively engage in your treatment and enjoy life to the fullest.

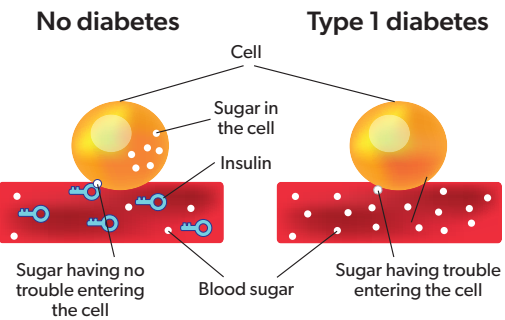
Type 1 diabetes is not preventable. It also doesn’t develop because of bad lifestyle choices. Its exact causes are still unknown.



What is type 1 diabetes?

Diabetes is a chronic disease characterized by higher than normal levels of sugar in the bloodstream.

Normally, blood sugar is kept within normal values primarily by insulin. Insulin is a hormone produced by the pancreas. It acts like a key that lets the sugar in the bloodstream enter the body's cells for use as a source of energy.



With type 1 diabetes, the body's immune system attacks the cells in the pancreas that make insulin. Consequently, there is a total lack of insulin production. Sugar then accumulates in the blood, causing blood sugar levels to rise above normal values.

Why it's essential to manage your diabetes

Diabetes is a disease with serious consequences. However, by learning how to live with the disease and taking steps to properly manage it, you can prevent or delay the onset of serious and irreversible complications, primarily to the:

- Eyes;
- Kidneys;
- Nerves;
- Blood vessels;
- Heart.

Where are you on your path to acceptance?

When you were diagnosed, you may have felt anger, fear or despair. All these reactions are normal. They are the stages of the adaptation process leading to acceptance of the disease. They vary from person to person and can be experienced more than once, at a different rate and in a different order.

Shock and denial:

A defence mechanism that protects you from a new, scary reality.

"It's not possible. The doctor must have made a mistake."

Anger and revolt:

A useful reaction that lets you express how unfair you feel the new diagnosis is so that you can move on to another stage.

"Why me? It's so unfair!"

Bargaining (yes, but...):

The first step towards acceptance, but the person attempts to reduce the treatment requirements.

"I am happy to monitor my blood sugar, but there's no way I'm counting carbohydrates!"

Depression (with hope):

The realization that some things will never be the same, and sometimes doubt about your ability to manage the disease.

"I'll never be able to control my blood sugar."

Acceptance and adaptation:

Achieving a balance that allows you to manage daily life by integrating diabetes treatment.

"I can live the life I want even if I have diabetes."

For some people, it can be difficult to accept their diabetes even after many years. Instead, they learn to **accept and live with the restrictions** that come with a diabetes diagnosis.

For parents of children with type 1 diabetes

Parents face many challenges when their child's diabetes is diagnosed. These challenges evolve over time and as the child gets older. Here are some strategies that can help you deal with them:

	Challenges	Strategies
When dealing with yourself	<div>Believing in your ability to learn about and manage your child's diabetes</div> <div>Being less afraid of low blood sugar</div> <div>Feeling less alone</div> <div>Coping with the stress and anxiety surrounding the treatment requirements</div>	<div>Learn more about diabetes.</div> <div>Develop your ability to manage the disease.</div> <div>Join a support group for parents of children with type 1 diabetes.</div> <div>Consult with professionals (dietitian, nurse, psychologist, doctor, pharmacist, etc.).</div> <div>Don't hesitate to reach out for help.</div>
When dealing with your child	<div>Comparing your child or seeing your child compare themselves to their non-diabetic friends</div> <div>Ensuring that your child understands the importance and necessity of managing their disease</div> <div>Providing your child with psychological and emotional support</div> <div>Trusting your child to manage their diabetes</div>	<div>Be sure to communicate with your child in an open and non-judgmental way.</div> <div>Avoid talking to your child only about their diabetes.</div> <div>Make sure your child recognizes the symptoms of hypoglycemia and knows how to treat it.</div> <div>Arrange for family therapy.</div> <div>Find out about summer camps for youth with diabetes.</div> <div>Encourage your child and congratulate them on their achievements.</div>
When dealing with others	<div>Trusting others (family members, daycare, school) to manage your child's diabetes</div> <div>Dealing with judgment, lack of understanding and false beliefs about type 1 diabetes</div> <div>Experiencing social exclusion</div>	<div>Write out your child's diabetes management plan for family members and caregivers.</div> <div>Ensure that caregivers know how to detect and treat hypoglycemia, including how to administer glucagon.</div> <div>Educate your friends and peers about diabetes.</div> <div>Bring snacks to events (parties, outings, etc.).</div>
When dealing with the disease	<div>Going to medical appointments</div> <div>Counting carbohydrates</div> <div>Being able to detect and treat hypoglycemia</div> <div>Measuring your child's blood sugar and injecting insulin</div>	<div>Ensure a fair division of diabetes-related tasks and activities between both parents.</div> <div>Use the available technology to make managing the disease easier.</div> <div>Accept that nothing is perfect.</div>