



My Diabetes Story

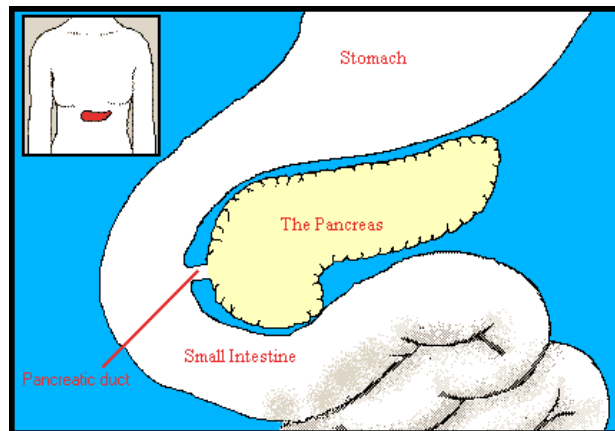
(As written by Cole as part of a presentation to his 1st grade class.)

I found out when I was 6 years old that I have something called Type 1 diabetes.

I was running in the Yarmouth Clam Festival race and I kept having to drink and pee. I placed second in my age group and got a cool trophy. Two days later I was in the hospital with a diagnosis of type 1 diabetes.

Type 1 diabetes is a condition where the balance between a hormone called insulin and digested food is uneven.

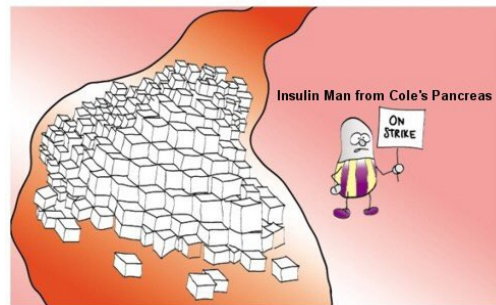
Insulin is made by your pancreas (an organ that looks like your stomach). Insulin helps you take the food that you eat and turn it into energy.



When someone has Type 1 diabetes they can't make insulin anymore.

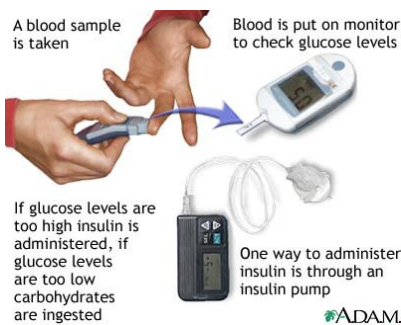
The good news is that you can take insulin to regain that good balance with the food you eat. The not-so-good news is that you have to take insulin by giving yourself a shot.

It is real important for me to have a good balance between my blood sugar (digested food) and insulin.



Your pancreas works automatically to keep your blood sugar balanced. But because my pancreas doesn't work as well, I have to test my blood sugar. To test my blood sugar I do a finger stick. To do a finger stick, you prick your finger with a needle and get a drop of blood and put it into a little machine. The machine tells me how high or low my blood sugar is.

I do this a lot during the course of a day, probably 10-20 times. During the night my parents wake up to do this for me.



If it is too high I need insulin, and if it is too low I need to drink some juice or eat a cracker.

At school I do my finger sticks and insulin shots before lunch in nurse R's office. She is pretty cool.

Diabetes isn't the most fun thing to have. But my mom reminds me that there are a lot of challenges in life - Type 1 diabetes just happens to be my challenge.

Mom says diabetes won't keep me from doing anything. In fact, a lot of really amazing people have type 1 diabetes, like Gary Hall Jr. who won a gold medal in the Olympics in swimming and Adam Morrison from Gonzaga University who got drafted into the NBA a couple of years ago. The youngest Jonas Brother has type 1 diabetes.

The other good news is that there are a lot of people trying to figure out how to make diabetes go away so that is good too.

One of the most important things for me or to avoid is a low blood sugar. Usually I feel kind of shaky or dizzy when my blood sugar gets too low. Kind of like when you get really hungry and crabby, except in my case it is like that x10. So if you know someone who has diabetes and they say that they're feeling kind of shaky or acting dizzy please tell a grown-up and get them some juice so they can feel balanced again.

Thanks so much for reading my story. If you want to help come race with us at the Diabetes Dash for Kids on September 27, 2009 – it should be fun!