



Diabetes and Healthcare at Camp

Dear Parents, Families, and Caregivers,

For those of you who are new to DYF and the Camp Magic, **Welcome!** Camp is a special place for kids impacted by type 1 diabetes. Whether you are brand new or have been coming for 15 years, we can't wait to share it with you. The impact of living with diabetes goes far beyond blood sugars, and living well with diabetes is about much more than insulin dosing. Diabetes impacts blood sugar, but it also impacts our sense of safety and security, of normalcy and community.

So why is camp so unique and special? And how does camp further your child's ability to manage diabetes?

First, **camp is community.** The positive relationships and sense of belonging are important feelings that many kids, especially those impacted by type 1 diabetes, have trouble finding elsewhere. At camp, kids realize that they are not alone in their struggles and frustrations with diabetes. Within the context of camp, children learn trust, safety, and teamwork as key elements to developing a bond with others. For many campers (and staff!), this sense of community sustains them throughout the year, and kids will remember and fall back on the caring environment they experienced at camp.

Camp builds resilience— this is the ability to successfully adapt to adversity or stress. This adversity is experienced at some point by everyone who is affected by diabetes, including siblings, parents and grandparents. Camp works to teach and encourage behaviors, thoughts, and actions that allow kids and their families to manage the challenges they are facing. We cannot eliminate the difficulty that comes from living with diabetes, but we can help kids and adults learn to successfully navigate those challenges.

Last, **camp builds knowledge of diabetes.** Even those campers who have been coming to camp for many years continue to learn new strategies and approaches to caring for their diabetes at camp. These can range from learning about insulin pumps, to trying out "mini gluc," to being inspired to wear a CGM. While everyone's experience and knowledge is different before coming to camp, it can always be expanded. Equally important, campers learn that challenge is a part of diabetes, and they learn tips and tricks from their peers about successfully navigating this.

As has been the case every summer since our founders Doc and Ellen began camp in 1938, there will be high and low blood sugars, there will be challenges, and homesickness, and worry. These aspects are as much a part of camp as the campfire and the hikes and the archery range; we see your kids thrive, and *through these challenges, they will learn and grow.*

While camp is a fun week away for your children, we hope it also provides a break for you, their parents and caregivers who work around the clock serving as your child's pancreas. You do such a tremendous job, and this is your time to recharge and to enjoy NOT worrying about carb counts, trend lines, and CGM alarms.

Your kids are in good hands.

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