



Preparing for College with Diabetes

A checklist for supplies to pack and student life issues to consider when going off to college.

Before leaving home

- Gather your diabetes supplies:
 - Sharps container
 - Extra insulin, strips, meter, batteries, lancets, alcohol swabs
 - Ketone strips
 - Emergency treatment for low blood sugar (glucose tabs, glucagon)
 - Emergency foods for sick days (sugar-free drinks, puddings, gelatin mixes, soup, crackers)
 - Thermometer
 - Cold remedies
- Get a medical alert dog tag or bracelet
- Find a local diabetes care provider, if possible
- Make list of phone numbers of new and old diabetes team members
- Make future appointment with team or new provider
- Copy insurance card
- Know what insurance will cover (emergencies, other providers, etc.)
- Know how to purchase medications (mail order or local pharmacy)
- Get an extra copy of prescriptions
- Get a copy of your medical records (and bring your Diabetes Passport)
- Get a copy of the handout called Diabetes Management When Sick with a Cold or Flu
- Be sure there is a refrigerator in dorm room to stock medications
- Get the necessary immunizations

At school

Roommates and Resident Assistants (RA)

- Tell them that you have diabetes. Be simple and matter-of-fact.
- Explain signs of low blood sugar (“Can look like I’m drunk”).
- Review emergency steps for hypoglycemia (administer glucose gel) or unconsciousness (call 911, administer glucagon).
- Show glucagon pen and store in safe place (consider teaching roommate how to give it).

The college student health center

- Visit the health center and ask what services they provide. Can they help manage your diabetes, including checking A1C, treating illness? If not, come up with alternate plan.

Class workload and exams

- Educational institutions are required to provide reasonable accommodations for students with diabetes. You may have rights to retake tests if your blood sugar is low or high before an exam and you do poorly. You will need to contact the **campus disability center** to learn your rights.

Dining

- Get a copy of nutritional information from the cafeteria where you'll be living
- Buy the Calorie King Book for eating out (www.calorieking.com) or download a nutrition app for your phone.

Athletes

- Tell coach signs and symptoms of low blood sugar and how to treat
- Bring rescue food, meter and insulin to athletic events
- Remember to avoid exercise if BG is greater than 250 and ketosis present, or if BG is greater than 300

Getting Extra Support

The transition to college is a big change! It's not unusual to experience a few bumps in the road as you adjust to managing diabetes independently, living away from home, and juggling academics and campus life. Connecting with a mental health counselor can be helpful. If you need someone to talk to, consider:

- Scheduling a visit with your campus counseling service (typically a part of the college student health center).
- Contacting your insurance company for a list of counselors in your area who are covered.
- Asking your primary care provider or endocrinologist for a referral.

For More Tips

Check out the College Diabetes Network website: collegediabetesnetwork.org

Have fun and study hard!

Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your child's nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.