

## **What is Diabetes Type I – A Summary**

Diabetes is a disease in which a person's own immune system destroys the islet cells in the pancreas. Islet cells produce insulin. Insulin allows food and drink to enter our body's cells as glucose, giving us energy. A person with Type I Diabetes can no longer produce insulin or maintain a normal blood sugar level. Insulin must be given by multiple injections each day for the rest of his/her lifetime. Blood sugar levels will vary widely from low to high, and must be monitored closely by testing a drop of blood many times throughout each day.

Low blood sugar levels are an immediate concern. Exercise, lack of food, and insulin will cause blood sugar levels to drop. If left untreated, this will lead to seizures or coma. Food and drink with carbohydrates will cause blood sugar levels to rise.

## **The Truth about Type I Diabetes**

- ?? A person cannot get diabetes by eating too much sugar.
- ?? Diabetes is NOT contagious under any circumstances.
- ?? People with diabetes can eat sweets & desserts as part of a nutritional meal plan.
- ?? Most children are diagnosed with diabetes at age 12.

## **Social Guidelines for Grant & Diabetes**

Please do not refer to Grant as a “diabetic.” Please say that Grant “has” diabetes.

Please treat Grant as “normally” as possible, including him in all activities.

Please do not hide Grant's blood sugar tests or snacks from other students. We want others to understand that this is an important part of Grant's life.

We would be happy to answer questions that parents, staff, or students might have concerning Grant's diabetes.

Please answer questions from other students with simple and honest information. When kids ask us what we're doing during a blood sugar test, we say, “We're putting this drop of blood into the machine. It will tell us how Grant is doing.”

Grant has had diabetes since he was 21 months old. He is just now beginning to learn how to manage his diabetes. He will generally not notice when his blood sugar is low, high, or dropping. He will need assistance in treating his low blood sugars. This will improve each year as he becomes more proficient at managing his diabetes.

## **General Teacher Responsibilities**

Allow the nurse to perform blood sugar tests in the classroom (or wherever Grant is at the time.) Allow Grant to drink milk (and eat food if necessary) in the classroom to treat a low blood sugar. This will disrupt Grant's learning as little as possible.

Be aware that it takes 15 minutes for milk to BEGIN raising his blood sugar level after a low blood sugar incident. Be nurturing and patient. Grant may feel sleepy, shaky, ill, or irritable. Most people have little recollection of severe low blood sugar events or their actions at the time. He may also feel just fine.

Studies have shown that children learn poorly during episodes of high or low blood sugar levels. If you feel this is a consideration during a particular exam, please postpone the exam until another time.

Provide information to all substitutes so they can care for Grant's needs.

Although Grant should not eat or drink foods without parental permission, please give Grant all foods that are given to the other students. Allow Grant to bring the special treat home so that we can work it into his meal plan. On special occasions, when you know you will be handing out food or drink, contact us ahead of time so that we can make arrangements (if possible) for Grant to eat the food and drink at school with the other students.

## **FYI**

Grant receives 3 insulin shots each day and a minimum of 6 blood sugar tests each day.

Grant's insulin dosages and food requirements change frequently.

Grant wears a watch that beeps to remind him of his 10:00 snack.

## Grant Mocker – Diabetes Type I

Thank you for taking time to read the information about Grant and diabetes. We truly appreciate the extra time you take to make sure our son's health is a priority. Please call us at any time with questions, concerns, or comments.

If you wish to discover more about Grant and diabetes, try logging onto his web site at [www.DiabetesTown.com](http://www.DiabetesTown.com). We hear from people all over the world who have young children with diabetes. Enjoy the photos and keep up on the happenings in Grant's life!

Jeff & Tish Mocker