



University of Iowa  
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# **NEW SCHOOL NURSE RESOURCES: DIABETES CAMP, THE BEST WEEK OF YOUR SUMMER!**

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# OBJECTIVES



- 1) Summarize reasons for a child to consider attending a diabetes camp
- 2) Compare and contrast the risks and benefits of overnight diabetes camp attendance
- 3) Discuss preparations for school nurses, parents, and children to take prior to and after camp attendance to optimize diabetes control during this period
- 4) Improve parent and child comfort in considering diabetes care out of the home, particularly while in a camp setting



# SO, WHAT EXACTLY IS DIABETES CAMP?

- 3-7 day overnight camp staffed by medical professionals and volunteers with diabetes or diabetes interest
  - Some day camps also available, such as sports camps
- Independent or associated with American Diabetes Association
- Similar activities to other camps but with diabetes support
- Often hosted 1-2 weeks at larger organization camp like YMCA, Lion's Camp, Easter Seals



# IF IT IS LIKE OTHER CAMPS, WHAT'S THE BENEFIT

- Peace of mind for campers and families with medical professional monitoring diabetes control
- Comradery – “you are not alone!”
- Positive role models
- Safe place to try out independent diabetes cares
  - First independent injection
  - First independent placement of CGM or pump site
  - Practice counting carbohydrates
- Many provide supplies for campers
- Carb counts for meals plus gluten free and sometimes dairy free options



# ARE THERE RISKS TO ATTENDING CAMP?

- Change in activity, so potential change in insulin needs and blood sugar fluctuations
- If not following standard MDI or pump therapy with carb counting, may be more difficult to adjust insulin needs throughout the week
- Hard for parents to be disconnected from managing
- Medical providers need to understand MDI, open loop pump and closed loop therapies
- Other health issues can arise which complicate care
  - Poison Ivy
  - Viral URIs



# WHAT HAPPENS IF A CAMPER HAS BG CHANGES?

- Medical staff keep records for each camper and based on trends may change pump settings or injection doses
  - Medical staff will meet with family and usually ask for a different pump profile to change around
- There are low treatments at activities +/- in cabins vs medical lodge
- Frequent nighttime blood sugar checks
- Campers can still use their CGMs for continuous monitoring and treatment



# SO CAMP SOUNDS FUN, BUT IS THERE DATA ABOUT BENEFITS

- No significant hemoglobin A1c benefits but some increase in social support-seeking as coping strategy in one study
- Study of 38 parent-child dyads: improved attitude toward illness, improved self-efficacy
- 2488 children and 2563 parents surveyed showed broad-based psychosocial benefits
  - Parents with higher pre-camp distress and lower perception of youth independence in self-care
  - Youth decreased distress and increased independence in self-care
  - Higher hemoglobin A1c pre-camp related to higher pre-camp distress



## ARE THERE OPTIONS FOR A FAMILY CONCERNED ABOUT BEING APART FROM THEIR CHILD?

- Yes! Family Camp!
  - Often in fall and/or spring for a weekend
  - May be for recently diagnosed children or for all children
  - Similar activities as summer camp plus classes for parents
  - Helps with finding supportive community for the whole family



# HOW CAN I GET CAMPERS SIGNED UP?

- Don't delay, some camps fill up quickly!
- Don't avoid applying due to cost! Lots of grants and scholarships available!
- Look on the ADA website and/or look up local diabetes camps



# HOW CAN I HELP CAMPERS GET READY

- Encourage families to consider camp
- Provide BG logs if camper in summer school prior to camp or helping with summertime dosing
- Express positivity to families that the experience can outweigh if BG control is different than at home
- Make sure that family aware to bring technology supplies and that they will have enough



# THANK YOU!

- Questions?

