

OFF TO COLLEGE...

Tips for taking diabetes to college:

- Make sure to have enough **supplies for 1-3 months** (insulin, syringes, pump supplies if on a pump, test strips, ketone test strips, etc.).
- Have a plan for **how to store supplies**... Make sure you will have a refrigerator in your room.
- Work with parents on a plan for **refilling prescriptions**... Where will you get supplies? When to refill? How to pay? Keep your pharmacy phone number readily available.
- Have a copy of your **insurance card** that you carry with you at all times. Keep a copy in your room.
- Develop a plan for how you will **dispose of sharps**.
- **What your roommate and RA should know:** how to help you in case of an emergency, where you store your supplies, how to help you recognize and treat a low, and emergency information.
- If you are going to college away from home, work with your parents to help find a doctor/clinic close to your school. Also have a plan for **where to go or who to call for urgent needs**. Keep all important phone numbers handy.
- It's important to **continue seeing your endocrinologist every 3 months**, even while at college. Schedule these appointments well in advance so you can either schedule them during a break from school, or on a day of the week when you have more time. Discuss with your parents how to help you handle this (how to get to the appt., if you want them to come with you, who will schedule the appt., etc.).
- Continue with **yearly eye exams**.
- Wear a **Medical Alert** bracelet or necklace at all times.
- **Check blood sugar before driving**. Make sure you have glucose tablets in the car at all times in case of a low.
- **Have plenty of snacks**, juice, glucose tablets, etc. available to you in your room and in your backpack **to treat a low at anytime**.

- Get a **flu shot** in the fall.
- **Have a plan for how to handle “sick days”**. Have ketostix available to check ketones. Consider making a “sick day box” with supplies for managing any illness.
- If you drink **alcohol**, make sure you are with someone who knows you have diabetes. Use alcohol only in moderation and make sure to eat something. Alcohol prevents stored sugar in the liver from being released when your body needs it, which can result in low blood sugars for up to 12 hours. **(NOTE: Glucagon does not work when you have been drinking alcohol.)** This is also a problem because symptoms of a low can be similar to how someone acts when they are drunk... People around you need to know that you may be having a low, not intoxicated, and that they need to help you eat something, not just let you “sleep it off”. Remember, alcohol is illegal until the age of 21!
- For women with diabetes it’s also important to be thinking about the possibility of **pregnancy**. If you have uncontrolled diabetes when you get pregnant, you are at high risk of having a complicated pregnancy and the baby is at significantly higher risk for birth defects. If you have more questions about this, we encourage you to have a discussion with your physician.
- Remember too, this is an important time to be taking care of your diabetes in order to prevent future complications. A1c goal is 7% or less (meaning an average blood sugar of about 150).
- Finally, **ENJOY** this time in your life and make the most of it!!

McNeely Diabetes Center
Phone 651-220-6624
Fax 651-220-6064
Appointments 651-220-6818