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Troubles, Trials and Triumphs: Managing the Toddler and Preschooler with Type 1 Diabetes
Jean Corrigan, RN, MA, CDE
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Colleen Farley-Cornell, MS, RD, CDN, CDE
The Ultimate Goal
- As optimal glycemic control as feasible for each developmental level
- Optimal growth and development
- A socially, emotionally and psychologically healthy child...who just happens to have diabetes

Inside a Toddler’s Mind
1. Sharing is for suckers.
2. Just so you know, hide & seek is always on.
3. Theft only counts when I say it.
4. Your 2 minute trip to the dryer equals 1 empty tissue box, 2 laps around the house with toilet paper and 3 upside-down toy bins.
5. I hate “Slow down” or “Come here” or “RUN FOR YOUR LIFE!”
6. I do MAD at 100% and 100 km/h.
7. Blueberries, bunny crackers or chocolate chips are my downfall.
8. You have exactly one second between when I am done eating my cereal and when it hits the floor.
9. Everything I see and touch is mine. MINE!
10. I like pooping outside.

Erikson’s Stages
- Toddler - 18 months through 3 years
- Preschool – 3 through 5 years

Toddler/Preschool
- Developmental Tasks
  - Trust
  - Autonomy
  - Initiative
**Toddler/Preschool**

**Physical Considerations**
- Rapid growth and development
- Finicky Eaters
- Naps and long overnight periods
- Limited ability to communicate distress
- Erratic eating associated with growth spurts

**Toddler/Preschool**

**Physical Considerations**
- Rapid dehydration due to body surface
- Especially vulnerable during illness
- Hypoglycemic unawareness
- Impaired cognitive function possible

**Toddler/Preschool**

**Developmental Considerations**
- Trust / Separation / Initiative
- Magical thinking
- Concern about body intactness
- Difficulty understanding need for treatment

**Toddler/Preschool**

**Psychosocial Consideration**
- Meeting social and educational needs
- Education of family/daycare/caregivers
- Support opportunities for parents/family
- Fostering adjustment to special needs

**Case Study**
- Ella currently 5 years of age
- Diagnosed at 2 years 1 month old
- Transferred to practice 6 mos after dx
- On NPH and Novolog 2 times daily
- Active toddler - age appropriate development

**A1C**
- 9.8 %
**Family Situation**
- Ella has a 5 month old sister
- Parents work together but no family close by
- Do not want Multiple injection therapy
- Numerous BG readings day/night - fear of lows
- Parents appear stressed and overwhelmed

**What is Happening?**
- Parents overwhelmed balancing life of toddler and diabetes care
- Fearful of lows initially seen during honeymoon period
- Inconsistencies with insulin doses
- They are new parents themselves

**Things to consider**
- Assess daily care – family situation
- CGMS – Pump therapy
- Encouraged dose consistency
- Download and communicate with team frequently

**Where Did We Start?**
- Changed NPH at night to Lantus
- Started on Dexcom G 4
- Fast tracked to IPT within 6 months of transfer
- Contact at least weekly
- Support through parents/ TAPS

**And the A1C is….**
7.8% - 8%

**Tips for Toddler Care**
- Anxiety over procedures
- Child needs some control over his world
- Don’t be a short order cook
- Erratic activity
- Small Body Frame
- Blood testing
  - Potential for erratic patterns
  - Not ‘good’ or ‘bad’
**Tips for Toddler Care**
- Keep life as normal as possible
- Need to trust their outside world
- Play therapy
- Role of Pumping and CGMS
- Remember the siblings

**Using all Tools available**
- Technology may help
  - Dexcom G4 Platinum with share
  - Pumps
  - Sensors
  - My Sentry

**Sites and Sets**
- IV prep or alcohol
- Bard
- Cavilon
- Opsite
- Adhesive remover
- Witch hazel
- Calamine lotion
- Tough Pads

**Words of Wisdom**
Don’t start something you can’t finish
Would I allow this if my child didn’t have diabetes??

**In order to improve blood glucose readings**

**Sometimes a parent will decrease food**

**Current ADA Guidelines**
Blood Glucose and A1C
In Pediatrics
**Tips for Day Care and Preschool**
- School setting major part of life –
  - The Law
  - Partnering with the school for child’s success
- Educate parent to be child’s advocate
- Encouraging healthy social interactions
- Promoting independence and minimizing differences – while keeping the child safe

**Starting Day Care or Preschool…**
- Mom and Dad are apprehensive
- They had total responsibility for care
- Now transitioning care to others
- For many, this is a major concern

**They Want Me To Be OK**

**The Key to Success**
- Plan ahead
- Just as important
  - I am a child who happens to have diabetes
  - No one likes to be treated different

**My Condition Does Not Define Me!**

**Nutrition for Toddlers/Preschool**
- Requirements
- Adequate calories for growth
- Three meals and two to three snacks
- Age appropriate portions
- Encourage a variety of food
- Meals and snacks should be nutrient rich
- Iron rich foods to prevent iron deficiencies
Macro-Nutrient Needs

- Calories
- Carbohydrates
- Protein
- Fat
- Fiber

Dietary Reference Intakes for Energy, Carbohydrate, and Fat; Fatty Acids, Cholesterol, Protein and Amino Acids National Academy of Sciences 2002

Important Micronutrients

Nutrients most toddlers may not get enough

- Iron 3-7mg
- Calcium 500-700 mg
- Vitamin D 400 IU

Dietary Reference Intake (DRI's) Recommended Intake for Individuals, Macronutrients
Food and Nutrition Board, Institute of Medicine, National Academies 2004

Institute of Medicine of the National Academies Dietary Reference intakes for Calcium and Vitamin D November 2010
American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)

Nutritional Needs

Serving size for toddlers is small
- Toddlers require 1 tbsp of solid food per age

Examples serving sizes:
- Grains and Cereals
- Dairy
- Meat and Meat Alternatives
- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Fat

Total Carbohydrate Needs

Age 2-4 years of age
Daily Total Carbohydrates 130-175g
- Breakfast 25-35g
- Lunch 30-45g
- Dinner 30-45g
- 2-3 Snacks 15g

Nutritional Challenges

- Finicky eater
- Sporadic eating
- Food jags
- Nap time
- Physical activity
- Appetite changes daily
- Meal planning

Toddler Meal Plan

Servings per day:
- Dairy: 2 Servings (12-24 grams of carbohydrates)
- Grains and Cereals 2-4oz (48-72 grams of carbs)
- Meat/meat alternatives 1-2oz
- Fruits 1-2 servings (15-30 grams of carbohydrates)
- Vegetables 1-2 servings (5-10 grams of carbohydrates)
- Fats 1-2 serving (1-2 tsp)
Simple Solutions

- Try new foods often
- Pair new foods with familiar foods
- Meal timing
- Meal Structure
- Offer small portions
- Involve the Toddler

Learning Every Day!

- Empower the child and family
  - Education
  - Utilize all positive support systems
  - Teach our children well
  - Development of
    - Problem Solving Skills
    - Coping Skills

Words of Wisdom

- Turn Challenges into Opportunities
- Be positive
- Optimize the child’s learning potential.
- Parents are role models