

# H PEDIATRIC UNIT

## The Emotional Side of Diabetes

Living with diabetes can be stressful for both the person with diabetes and their family and friends. This is especially important at holidays when families gather to share celebratory meals. Time together does not have to be stressful if you understand how to offer the right support at the right time. These tips can help prevent feelings of resentment, anger, and unintentionally increasing tension in family dynamics.

First, let's take a small glimpse into what life is like as a diabetic. Each year, a person with diabetes checks their glucose levels an estimated 1,600 times and takes more than 1,400 insulin injections. Diabetics may spend the same number of hours every week managing their health the average person spend working a full-time job. A key difference is the person with diabetes didn't ask for or apply for this job.

So how can you best support this hard work? Consider acknowledging your friend or family member's efforts at taking care of themselves. If you have questions about how they handle their diabetes, ask! Try to avoid offering unsolicited advice and instead, ask if there is anything you can do to help support them.

If you have questions, try to ask them when you're not in a crowd to avoid putting a potentially unwanted spotlight on your friend or family member. Some diabetics may be sensitive about their insulin injections and glucose testing and don't wish to share these experiences. It's also helpful to avoid making comments about the food a diabetic is eating. Despite your good intentions, your comments may be taken as criticisms. It's better to ask questions.

The best support you can offer a diabetic is to become more educated about diabetes. Knowledge is power!

## Helpful Resource

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/chronic/Pages/Diabetes-Mellitus-Type-1-Diabetes.aspx>



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Should a situation arise in which your child needs to be admitted to a hospital, remember Hendricks Regional Health is home to Hendricks County's only designated pediatric unit, specially designed to treat children. Our experienced staff is available 24/7 to care for all ages from birth to 18 years. Learn more at [hendricks.org/pediatrics](https://hendricks.org/pediatrics).