

When I Got Diabetes: Letters to Chase

Chase Kroll

Dear Readers,

It is sad to say that if you are reading this you have probably just developed diabetes. I, myself, am diabetic so I know what you are going through right now. It's going to be tough at first, but after you get used to living with diabetes, it gets much easier. On a lighter note, I have lived with diabetes for close to five years now and I haven't found anything I cannot do. You will still be able to eat good food, if you can calculate the carbs, play sports, go to social events (like parties) and anything else you could do before you were diagnosed.

To help you cope with your strong emotions that you are feeling right now, I have collected letters from diabetics who have all gone through the same situation. They all share their stories of when they were diagnosed and tell how they were feeling. Hopefully this collection will give you a better idea of what life with diabetes is like.

It was a lot more difficult to write this book than I thought it would be. However, every time I got a letter I learned something valuable. Hopefully these stories make you feel like you are not alone and give you a better understanding of Diabetes. If there were any errors in the letters, it is my fault, not the writers. I had to retype some (my mom helped) and I tried not to change too much. I may have made some mistakes when I pieced them together. My Dell computer unfortunately crashed in the middle of this "project."

I had around 55 letters at that time and was able to retrieve almost all of them but if your story is not in the book, I am truly sorry. I know some of my letters were lost. I have tried my best to put everything back together..

Thank you to all of the people who wrote letters. This book wouldn't have been made without you. Also, thank you to anyone else who contributed and helped out along the way. People forwarded emails or posted my idea on bulletin boards for me and some reporters put me in their newspapers.

I am thinking about writing a second edition. If you are Type One and would like to write me a letter, email me at Whenigotdiabetes@aol.com. Also, many of my family members have had cancer and I have received letters from cancer patients. For this reason, I am beginning to collect letters for another book called When I Got Cancer. Write me at whenigotcancer@aol.com with stories. If you finish reading this book, please donate it to a doctor's office or a hospital so someone else can read it. If you would like to buy another copy of this book, it is on sale at www.krollbooks.com or at www.lulu.com.

Good luck with all your future tasks_

**Your friend,
Chase Kroll**

0 Chase	34 Janet
1 Carl	35 Ann Marie
2 Robert	36 Ian
3 Steven	37 Amelia
4 Joe	38 Vicky
5 Ben	39 Albion
6 Kellie	40 George
7 Brenda	41 Marley
8 Geoff	42 John
9 Earl	43 Jana
10 McKenna	44 Jenny
11 Sonya	45 Shayne
12 Ty	46 Lauren
13 Janet	47 Ameer
14 Kira	48 Connor
15 Gary	49 Kristina
16 Martha	50 Whitney
17 Joanne	51 Grace
18 Dana	52 Janhavi
19 Bev	53 Jenna
20 Patrick	54 Patti
21 Anthony	55 Kate
22 Danielle	56 Christopher
23 Chris	57 Lutresha
24 Jennifer	58 Olivia
25 Edwena	59 Lauren
26 Bobby	60 Amy
27 Blanca	61 Mariah
28 Sara	62 Ashley
29 Florence	63 Danielle
30 Benji	64 Kim
31 Chris	65 Nikki
32 Christine	
33 Chandler	

0
Chase, 14
Delaware
Diagnosed age 9

When I left for my biological father's house in Connecticut, I never knew that when I came back I would have a new challenge, diabetes. I waved to my mom and blew her a kiss before I boarded the plane. The plane ride was normal and I loved to look out the window to see the Earth so far below me. When I landed, my dad hugged me and we went to his car. This was the first time I had seen his new car. On the ride he showed me how the GPS worked and what it did. He had just gotten a new house and he gave me a quick tour. It was two stories and I thought it was an awesome house. He had a pool room, a bathroom with a walk in shower, a room with a Play- station Two, (of course that's where I slept) and a little back yard that was just the right size for throwing a football.

The next morning I woke up and my dad, uncle and I went to breakfast at a diner with my grandmother. We stuffed ourselves and went to my grandmother's house to watch a movie. We put in the movie and I jumped on the couch. But my throat was dry so I asked my grandmother who was in the kitchen to get me a soda. I drank that down quickly and then asked for a milk, then a water, then some more milk. Oh, and also by this time I had gone to the bathroom about twelve thousand times (more like 6 but...) So my dad decided to take me to a clinic. They

looked at my tongue. To all of our surprise, it was white and it was getting little scratches in it.

The nurse did an examination and that involved checking my blood sugar. She came back and told me my blood sugar was 508 which is way beyond the norm. When she told me I had diabetes, I was so shocked and confused. The doctor decided I should go to the hospital to regulate my blood sugar. So we drove to the hospital and they wheeled me into a room in a wheelchair. That cheered me up a little because I had never been in a wheelchair before. Then they had to put in an IV and I remember it took them a few tries to get the needle in a vein. I was so mad. Then I had to lie in the bed and I could only eat on a certain schedule.

I was so hungry. I was grateful that it was snack time. But when the nurse came in with half of an egg salad sandwich, my hopes of a big dinner were squashed. Then after devouring my scrawny snack, I had to get an insulin shot for the first time. The situation was getting worse and worse. But my dad secretly called my mom and step dad and told them what happened. I was sitting in the room a few hours later and my parents showed up. It was a total surprise. It made me feel way better.

The nurses brought in a video game system and luckily my dad had some games at his house. He drove the short distance back to the house and got the games while I talked to my mom about what had happened over the last few hours. When my dad got back, I played the video games with a break in between to check my blood sugar.

Over the next day or two, the doctors kept slowly getting my blood sugar to go down. The meals weren't

all that great, but I managed. I had to test my blood sugar and ketones a lot on those days, but other than that, I just sat around and watched TV. Finally, on New Years Day 2001, I was released from the hospital. I began my new life with diabetes.

Life certainly doesn't stop after getting diabetes. Oh no_ I went back to school and continued to do everything that I would normally do. Except before lunch I go see the nurse and test my blood. I still spend the nights at friends' houses but I have to give myself my shots. I can still go to parties and eat some cake, but I have to count the carbs and get a shot afterwards. After a few weeks, I got the hang of living with diabetes. When New Years Day 2002 came around, my diabetes 1st birthday, I had another thing on my mind.....an insulin pump.

The insulin pump is a great thing for all diabetics. Instead of about 3 shots a day, the pump only causes one shot every three days. As soon as I heard about this, I instantly knew that I needed one. I told my mom and we looked into the cost and how we could get one. It was expensive but luckily our insurance paid for it. A pump trainer came by my house and showed me all of the features on it. When I saw one up close and saw what it did, I was astounded. It could give you large amounts of insulin, called boluses, which are good for meals and things like that. It could also give you a little bit of insulin at a steady pace, called a basal, which shots could not do because they aren't in you at all times. With a pump it is much easier to correct and maintain my blood sugars. Once the lady showed me the features, she actually injected me with water in the pump instead of insulin so I could actually use it and get the hang of

it. I tried it and instantly favored it over the shots. When I put real insulin in it, it took a few weeks to get the basals adjusted but when I did, it was great. I experienced all these new abilities that I had only thought about while I was on the shots, like eating whenever I want.

Good and Bad Things about Diabetes

By Chase

There are many good and bad things about diabetes. I never thought diabetes would have good things, but there are a few. The good things are that it gets me out of class to test my blood before lunch. This is cool because I am always one of the first people in the lunch line. It also enables me to go to diabetes camp where I met Donovan McNabb. Not many people get to meet their heroes but diabetes was responsible for me meeting mine. Meeting him was a highlight of my life and I thank diabetes for giving me the chance. Diabetes helped me to learn how to eat healthier than I used to. I used to always eat junk food but now I eat more fruits and vegetables. Diabetes also helped me not be afraid of shots. Diabetes was somehow able to get me a cell phone, so in case of emergency I could call my parents. But that's not all I use it for; you can sometimes catch me chatting with my friends on it.

There are also a lot of bad things about diabetes. Diabetes causes me to have to take an unbelievable amount of shots. In one year a diabetic takes over a thousand shots if not on the pump. I also can't eat whenever I want because I am on a schedule. I can't eat a lot of junk like cotton candy anymore so I have to find other foods. Another bad thing diabetes causes is to test my blood a lot. Sometimes it makes me feel like I'm weird because no one else is doing it. But I have found friends with diabetes and hanging out with them and talking about some things is a great stress reliever. Another thing diabetes causes is when I go low it feels really bad and it also feels weird

when I run high. Another thing diabetes *sometimes* causes is a lot of questions from people who are interested. When some find out the details, they will either hang out with me a lot or not at all. So that's a good and bad thing. I either get a lot of friends or not a lot. I guess it depends on how you work diabetes. haha.

So in the end, diabetes can be a good or bad thing. It has a lot of pluses and minuses which I think even themselves out. My attitude also reflects the good and bad things about diabetes. If I have a bad attitude, it seems like there are more bad things, and vice versa.