With the start of the New Year, let's not forget to spread the love to our families and ourselves and keep our new year's resolutions. What better way to start the year than taking care of your diabetes by keeping your heart healthy with being active and exercising. Let's do this as an activity with our families and loved ones and get our hearts pumping with some healthy exercise.

What is the benefit of exercise? It improves your fitness, controls your weight, lowers your total body fat and helps in having good control of your blood sugar levels. Several studies have shown that exercise will lower your hemoglobin A1C level. It also decreases your risk of developing heart and circulation problems by decreasing your blood pressure and triglyceride levels.

When you exercise, your muscles increase their sugar use by five-seven times. This lowers your blood sugar levels and decreases the amount of insulin the pancreas has to produce. When exercising, you need to be more careful not to drop your glucose levels too low. Because of that, you may need less insulin when you are active.

Here are some ideas to keep in mind when you become active:

• Start slowly with walking for 5-10 minutes. You should work toward doing this for 30-60 minutes at least five days a week. The American Diabetes Association recommends engaging in at least 60 min of physical activity each day.
• Check blood sugar before, during, and after exercise. Your goal blood glucose levels should be > 100 mg/dl.
• Drink plenty of water before, during, and after exercising.
• Wear a bracelet or necklace that says you have diabetes. Tell coaches and exercise partners that you have diabetes.
• Always have fast-acting carbs with you. Remember that everyone is different in terms of his or her body needs of insulin and response to exercise.

Please talk to us at your next clinic appointment so we can have a good plan for your exercise and ways to keep your heart healthy!

“LOVE HORMONE” TREATS DIABETES

By Nakicia Smith, LMSW

The “love hormone” or “bonding hormone” improves health in diabetes, according to an article in Diabetes Self-Management. Scientists have been looking at oxytocin’s effect on health and found a strong connection with diabetes and weight. Studies have shown that oxytocin reversed insulin resistance and improved glucose in obese mice. Other studies have shown oxytocin promotes trust, calms fears and reduces anxiety. When we hug or kiss a loved one, oxytocin levels rise. As we go throughout our day let’s hug and kiss our loved ones!
The first step in managing care at school is to make sure there is a 504 Plan and a School Care Plan in place. The 504 Plan would specify accommodations agreed upon by you and the school. This would include what the child may need during classroom parties. There could be pizza, chips, cakes, cookies, juices; candy … the sky is the limit at class parties.

Plan ahead and talk to your child’s healthcare team about how to cover extra carbs that may be eaten at the party. Communicate that plan to give specific instructions on how to manage care during the party. Make sure that the school is aware that your child has diabetes.

Your child’s blood sugar will need to be checked and dosed with insulin if needed prior to the school care plan. Make sure the school is able to reach you during the party to discuss any concerns or questions they may have.

Allow your child to have fun! It is not suggested to allow your child to eat all of the above; however, there is absolutely no reason why they cannot enjoy a slice of pizza or two and a cookie. You can also send in sugar free or low carb foods for your child.

### ASK THE NURSE: Can my child participate in parties at school?

By Andrea Patterson, RN, BSN

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### MY SUCCESS STORY

By Ragan P, T1DM

My name is Ragan P. and I am a 13 year old female. I’ve been diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes for seven years.

The hardest part of having diabetes for me has been pricking my finger and changing from shots to an insulin pump because it was something different for me. I overcame my struggles with the help and support from my family.

Since being diagnosed I am still able to have fun. I have been involved in soccer since I was 9, played basketball when I was younger, and have gone to my friend’s house for sleepovers.

Advice I would provide to someone recently diagnosed is, it is going to take some getting used to. Remember to take your insulin and check your blood sugar. If you ever feel low or high don’t be afraid to tell an adult.

### STAFF SPOTLIGHT:

Madison Greer, RN, BSN, Diabetes Educator

Hello, my name is Madison Greer, and I am one of the diabetes educators in the Diabetes Clinic. Since being diagnosed with type 1 diabetes about 14 years ago, I knew I wanted to help others who had diabetes.

I attended Union University where I graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. I love my job at Le Bonheur working with children and their families as they learn how to manage their diabetes.

When I am not working, I enjoy spending time with family, friends, my puppy Riley, and riding my horse Midnight. I am very involved in my small group at Central Church. I am also a huge Memphis Grizzlies fan. (Griz. Grind.) One of my goals is to travel to at least one new city or country each year. My favorite place I have been to is London.

### CHIEF’S CORNER:

Dr. Ramit Akramzadeh, Pediatric Endocrinologist

We are excited to introduce our first quarterly Diabetes Program newsletter for families of patients at Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital. We hope you find the newsletter to be an informative and interactive tool to communicate questions, concerns, suggestions and ways to cope with diabetes.

There will be several featured sections that will appear in every edition as well as topics specific to the season. Some of the featured sections include recipe ideas, a patient question and answer section, Research Corner including Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF) initiatives, What’s happening at Le Bonheur Children’s Hospital and in the community. We ask for your participation in making this an enjoyable and informative newsletter. To provide feedback, email endocrinecenter@lebonheur.org.

### COOKING WITH THE DIETITION:

A lovely take on the classic egg in a nest.

By Tara Hefner, RD, LDN

Why not incorporate a little love into the first meal of the day, one of my favorite meals, breakfast. The classic egg in a hole has always been a healthy breakfast idea. With the help from a heart shaped cookie cutter it can become a part of your new go-to Valentine’s breakfast!

**INGREDIENTS:**

- 1 slice whole wheat bread (~15g carbs)
- 1 egg
- 1 TBSP olive oil
- salt and pepper to taste

**YOU WILL ALSO NEED:**

- 1 heart-shaped cookie cutter
- 1 medium skillet
- 1 spatula

**STEPS:**

1. Place the cookie cutter on top of your wheat bread and press down to create a heart-shaped hole in the middle.
2. Heat skillet over medium-low heat. You don’t want to get it too hot or it will burn the bread before the egg is done.
3. Warm 1 TBSP olive oil in skillet and drop the bread in and let it sit for 30 seconds.
4. Drop the egg in the heart-shaped hole and let it sit for one minute before flipping over.
5. Let the egg sit for one minute on each side.

**SERVING TIP:**

Serve with 1 cup of your favorite fresh fruit and 1 cup skim milk for a well-balanced breakfast.

**NUTRITION INFO:**

- Serving size: 1 slice, calories: 189, protein: 4 g, carbs: 15g

### MAKING A CONNECTION:

Research and Advances in Diabetes

By LaTonya Ivy, RN, MSN, BC-ADM, CDE

You’ve probably bumped into someone with a new gadget for treating diabetes or heard of someone starting a new medication to improve their A1C. These are just two examples of how previous and ongoing research studies have contributed to the many advances in diabetes.

Clinical research answers the questions of how and why diabetes develops. It helps explain the roles of genetics and environmental factors at play. Through research, we can explore potential avenues to prevent diabetes and its complications.

Findings from research studies not only impact medical therapies and guidance. Research is also the platform for patient advocacy and helps shape community awareness and education.


The Trial Net Study is a natural history study of the development of type 1 diabetes. To date, it is Le Bonheur’s largest active diabetes study with 392 participants currently enrolled. This study lines up with Le Bonheur’s diabetes focused research goal of improving the care of children with diabetes by providing evidence-based medicine.