

Tips for Wearing Your Insulin Pump and Continuous Glucose Monitor

How to be more comfortable

While devices like insulin pumps and continuous glucose monitors (CGMs) have many benefits, they can present unique challenges. Everyone's experience is a little different, but here are some ideas to help you work through common stumbling blocks that can go with using these devices.

I don't feel comfortable having something attached to me!

- It's common to feel uncomfortable with a pump or CGM. You might feel fine in some situations, but self-conscious in others. If you can, try to sit with this discomfort; it will get easier with time. And it can help you build skills to overcome other hurdles in life—diabetes-related or otherwise.
 - Even if it feels unnatural, remind yourself that wearing a device is nothing to be ashamed of.
 - Think about how you can dress to make yourself feel more comfortable—for example, pants or skirts with pockets are a good option for making some pumps less visible.
-

People don't get it and are always asking me what I'm wearing!

- Try to remember that people who ask questions are not necessarily passing judgement—they may simply be curious or interested!
 - Consider preparing different explanations for different people. To get you started, think about how you might respond to questions about your devices from a friend versus a stranger.
 - It is okay to not feel like educating others about diabetes all of the time. You might consider preparing a few responses that can redirect the conversation:
 - Use humor: e.g. "It's my superpower; what's yours?"
 - Use your smarts about diabetes when you feel like it: e.g. "Isn't technology great! Can you believe this tells me how my blood glucose level is all the time?"
-

It can be noisy!

Many diabetes devices give off a sound or alert to help keep you safe. If this happens during school or with friends, some people can feel stressed or embarrassed.

- Try explaining alerts to friends and peers in advance so they won't be taken by surprise. Work with your parents and school to make sure your teachers are aware that these alerts or a not a phone or other device not allowed in class. If an alarm goes off in public, just tend to it. People tend to electronic noises all the time.
-

To Learn More

- Endocrinology
206-987-2640
- Ask your child's healthcare provider
- seattlechildrens.org

Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line, 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.



- Create a plan for the types of alerts your device might have. This can make handling uncomfortable situations easier.
- Work with your medical team to program your devices so that your alarms can keep you safe but avoid disruption.

My parents will be able to see my blood glucose numbers all the time!

- When a device is attached to your body, it can feel like it should be yours to manage. As a teenager, you will likely gain some independence in your diabetes care, but it is normal and important for your parents to stay involved to some degree. Work with your parents/guardians to establish boundaries and responsibilities, and revisit these as needed.
- CGM data sharing has many benefits, but too much talk about your blood glucose can become overwhelming. Talk about your needs, and work with your parents/guardians and care team to set boundaries about when it is (and isn't) appropriate for your parents to contact you about your blood glucose.