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| **Activity 2.3.1: A Day in the Life of a Diabetic** |

Introduction

*Finger sticks*. *Counting carbohydrates*. *Daily medications and injections*. *Doctors’ visits for years to come*. A new diagnosis of diabetes can be extremely overwhelming. Whether a person has Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes, the disorder has a substantial impact on not only the individual with the disease, but also the individual’s close family and friends. We know that Anna had to adjust the way she thought about food, but how did her diagnosis change other aspects of her life?

In this activity you will help patients like Anna, confronted with a new diagnosis of diabetes, by designing a “What to Expect” guide. While the guide should address the basic biology of the disease, it should focus on how Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes changes the daily life of those affected. Your guide should offer insight into a typical day in the life of a diabetic and should highlight daily routines, restrictions, lifestyle choices and modifications, as well as tips for coping and acceptance. Paint a picture that will help diabetics face their disease and move forward with confidence.

Equipment

* Computer with Internet access
* Laboratory journal
* Career journal
* Career Journal Guidelines
* Biomedical Sciences Documentation Protocol

Procedure

1. Decide whether you will create a guide for patients newly diagnosed with either Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes. You teacher may assign you one of the two diseases.
2. Discuss possible formats with your partner. Your final product could be a pamphlet or brochure, an article, a website or webpage, a video, a podcast or blog, or another format of your choosing.
3. Note that your guide should focus on daily life with the disease. At this point, do not focus on complications or short and long term health risks associated with being a diabetic. You want to be honest about what life will be like, but you want to provide some comfort and clarity to a person who is most likely overwhelmed and scared. Your guide should include (but is not limited to) the items listed below. How you address each topic is up to you.

* General background on the biology of the disease – include information from your work in Lesson 2.1.
* Basic recommendations for a diabetic diet – build on the information you listed in Activity 2.2.2 and refer back your nutrient analysis for Anna Garcia.
* A discussion of the role of blood sugar monitoring and adjustment.
* Recommendations for exercise and lifestyle and a discussion of how staying fit relates to keeping diabetes in control.
* A discussion of three biomedical professionals who could be of assistance to a diabetic. Include a general description of how their specific skills could be of use to a diabetic. Choose from the list below or add additional careers as approved by your teacher. Note that you will complete career journal entries for these three professionals later in this activity.
  + Nutritionist or dietician
  + Endocrinologist
  + Primary care physician
  + Certified diabetic educator (CDE)
  + Ophthalmologist
  + Clinical researcher
  + Podiatrist
  + Psychologist or Psychiatrist
* (Optional) Quotes or a story from the perspective of a diabetic. If possible, interview someone you know who is a diabetic. If an interview is not possible, view online videos or read online personal stories to help you capture the personal side of the disease.

1. Begin to locate valid sources of information about life with diabetes. Refer to the Evaluating Websites resource you used in Lesson 2.1 to help you find reliable resources. There are websites, chat rooms, online support groups, articles, and research materials on the Internet, all having to do with living with diabetes. You may also contact actual people who have the disorder and conduct interviews. Many local towns and cities have diabetes support groups and organizations that could be excellent sources of information. Many hospitals and health centers also sponsor support groups and conduct seminars on this topic. Do not hesitate to use any or all of these strategies.
2. Visit the following sites to gather information and generate ideas for how to compile your final product.

* LifeMed Media, Inc. – Diabetic Life <http://www.dlife.com/> -- Includes articles and video segments about life with diabetes.
* Health Central – Diabetes <http://www.healthcentral.com/diabetes/?ic=2300> – Contains videos and slideshows of information as well as a section for living with the disease.
* American Diabetes Association <http://www.diabetes.org/> – Addresses all aspects of the biology of the disease as well as living with diabetes.

1. Work with your partner to assemble your diabetes guide. Make sure to address each requirement listed in Step 3, but be creative in how you present your material. Follow the Documentation Protocol to document your sources.
2. Swap completed “What to Expect” guides with a group that researched the other type of diabetes. Read the information presented.
3. Take out the diabetes Venn diagram you started in Activity 2.1.1. Add additional information about Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes that you have learned through this activity to the diagram.
4. Follow the Career Journal Guidelines and complete an entry in your Career Journal for two of the careers explored. (Nutritionist or dietician, endocrinologist, primary care physician, certified diabetic educator (CDE), ophthalmologist, clinical researcher, podiatrist, psychologist, or psychiatrist.)
5. Follow the *Biomedical Sciences Documentation Protocol* to correctly document or cite the sources of information you used.
6. Answer the Conclusion questions.

Conclusion

1. How does life with Type 1 diabetes compare to life with Type 2 diabetes? Mention at least three specific comparisons.
2. When a person is diagnosed with diabetes, what changes would one have to make in lifestyle and diet?
3. Describe the importance of checking blood sugar for a diabetic.