

LEVELED BOOK • L

Diabetes and Me



Written by Gabrielle Fimbres

www.readinga-z.com

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Mia traveled to Washington, D.C., to help raise money to find a cure for type 1 diabetes. She also helped to organize a fund-raising walk at her school.

Nine-year-old Mia is one of almost three million children and adults in the United States who have type 1 **diabetes**. This disease causes the body to stop making **insulin**. Insulin allows our bodies' cells to take in **glucose**, or sugar, from food. Our bodies' cells need glucose for energy. Without insulin, the cells do not take in the glucose we need to work or play.



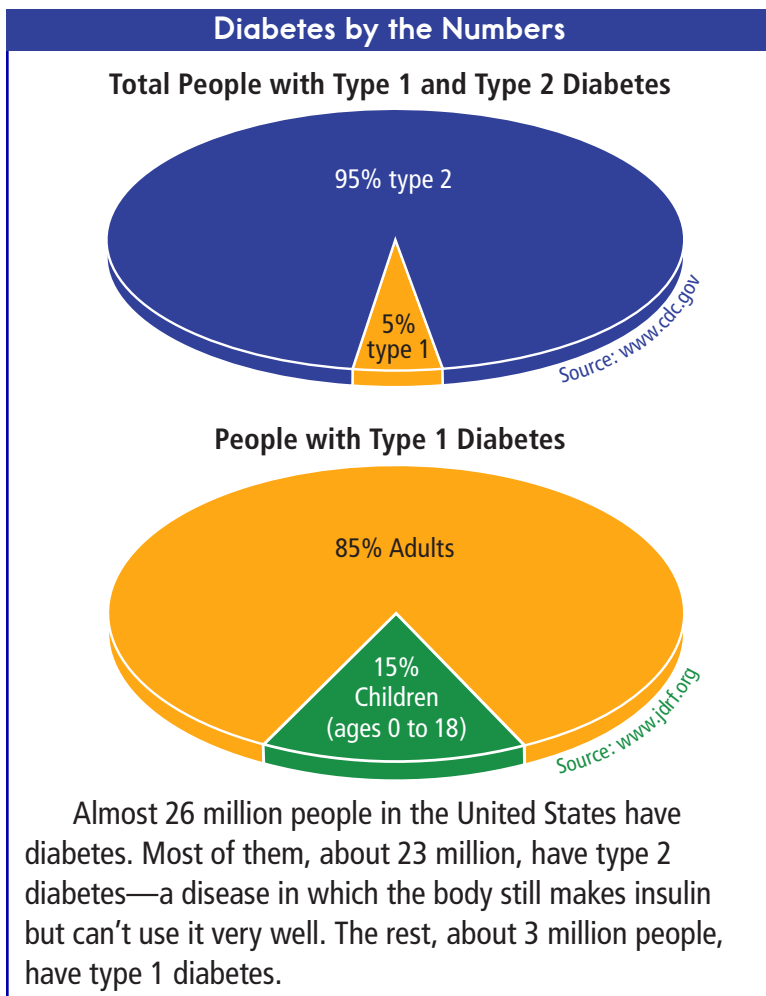
Mia plays catch with her dog Max.

Doctors don't know exactly what causes type 1 diabetes or how to cure it. With the right treatment, people with type 1 diabetes can live normal, healthy lives.

Do You Know?

According to experts, each year in the United States, more than fifteen thousand children and fifteen thousand adults learn that they have type 1 diabetes. That's about eighty people each day.

To live healthy lives, people like Mia take special care of themselves. They watch what they eat and get lots of exercise. They also test their **blood sugar** levels many times each day.

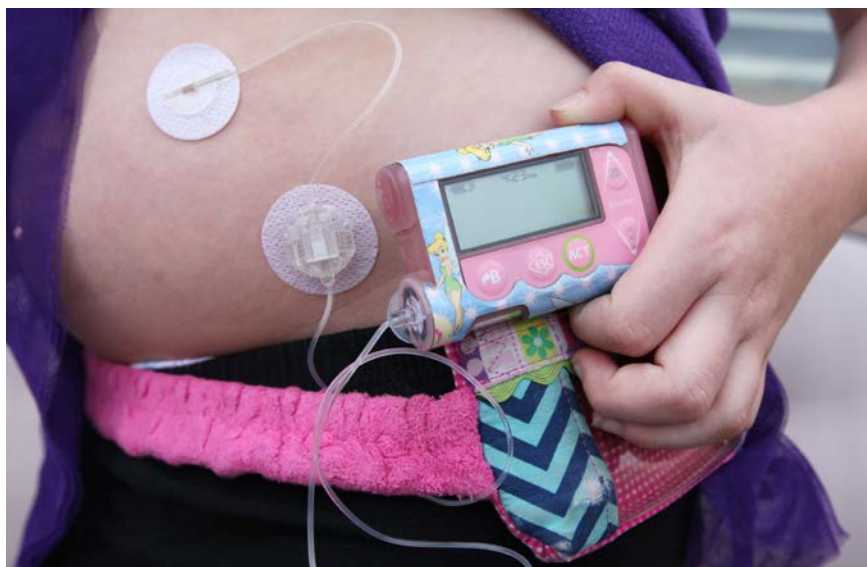




Mia's blood sugar test kit contains the meter, extra test strips, batteries, and a calibration device so her blood sugar tests are right.

Reading A-Z: How did you find out you have type 1 diabetes?

Mia: When I was four-and-a-half, I had to get up at night to go to the bathroom a lot. I went to the doctor, and they checked my blood sugar. It was really high. We had to go to the hospital, and I got scared. The day I got out of the hospital, I was feeling better.



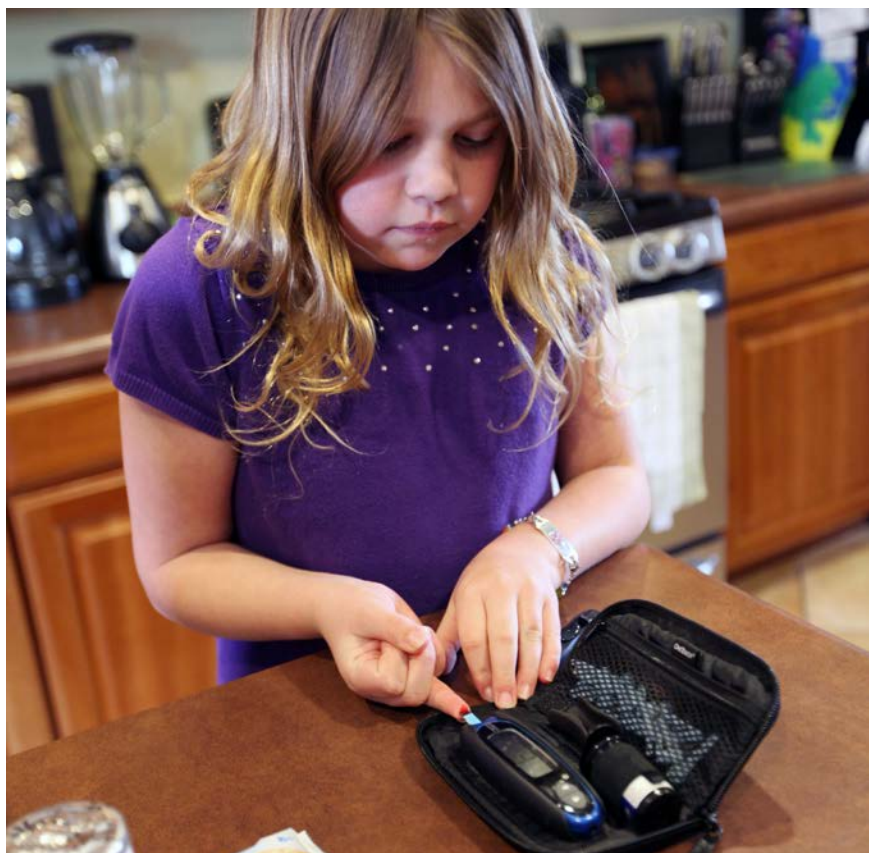
Insulin pumps are battery-operated devices that inject insulin into the body at a specific rate to control diabetes.

Reading A–Z: What kind of medicine do you take to stay healthy?

Mia: I take insulin. I wear an insulin pump near my waist. The pump makes taking the medicine easier.

Do You Know?

Most people who take insulin use a needle to put the medicine under the skin. Insulin pumps can deliver insulin more accurately than shots. They release small amounts of insulin all day long. They can even give bigger doses at mealtimes, if necessary.



Mia tests her blood sugar level to make sure she doesn't have too much sugar in her blood.

I prick my finger about twelve times a day to test my blood with a blood glucose meter. It doesn't hurt. If my blood sugar is high, the pump puts insulin into my bloodstream. If my blood sugar is low, I have a snack or some juice.



Mia adds up the number of carbohydrates in all her food so she can put the right number into her pump.

I count the **carbohydrates** in my food and put the number into my pump. That helps the pump know how much insulin to give me.



Mia eats snacks that have lots of protein because they have fewer carbohydrates than candy bars.

Reading A-Z: Are there foods you cannot eat?

Mia: I can eat anything I want. My mom just has to know about it, and I have to get the right amount of insulin.



Mia and her brother, Alex, like to ride their bikes for fun and exercise.

Reading A–Z: What other things do you do to stay healthy?

Mia: I ride my bike with my brother, Alex, and my friends. I like to roller-skate and swim and do archery. I get my arms exercising by climbing a tree.



Mia's bracelet has her name and her mom's phone number as well as her doctor's name and phone number.

I also wear a bracelet that tells people that I have type 1 diabetes. If I was walking home and my blood sugar was too low, I could pass out. The bracelet has my mom's phone number on it.

Mia's first aid kit includes fruit juice, snacks, insulin, needles, and a glucose emergency kit.



Reading A-Z: How does having type 1 diabetes make you different from other kids?

Mia: I have to go to the school nurse every few hours to have my blood sugar checked.



Mia shows Gabrielle from Learning A-Z how her insulin pump is attached.

Reading A-Z: What is the hardest thing about having diabetes?

Mia: My dad switches out the place where my pump is connected to my skin every three days. He has to move the needle.



Reading A–Z: What would you like other kids to know about having type 1 diabetes?

Mia: Diabetes is not **contagious**. You can play sports and do anything you want. Having type 1 diabetes can be kind of a bummer, but I'm used to it. I'm not much different from any other kid.

Glossary

blood sugar (<i>n.</i>)	the amount of sugar in one's blood (p. 5)
carbohydrates (<i>n.</i>)	food substances, such as sugars and starches, which provide an organism with energy (p. 9)
contagious (<i>adj.</i>)	able to spread through contact with people or other living things (p. 15)
diabetes (<i>n.</i>)	a disease in which the body cannot properly control the amount of sugar in the blood (p. 3)
glucose (<i>n.</i>)	a simple sugar made by plants during photosynthesis that is an important source of energy for all living things (p. 3)
insulin (<i>n.</i>)	a hormone that allows the body to turn glucose into energy (p. 3)

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Front cover: Mia sits with her dog Pinto.

Back cover: Mia likes to go horseback riding.

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