



Welcoming Girls with Diabetes into your Troop

Diabetes is a metabolic disease in which the body's inability to produce any or enough insulin causes elevated levels of glucose (sugar) in the blood. There are two kinds of diabetes: Type 1 and Type 2. Type 1 Diabetes occurs when the body's immune system destroys the cells in the pancreas that produce insulin. Without insulin, the body cannot properly process sugar from a diet. Type 2 Diabetes is increasingly common in children and occurs when the body either resists the effects of insulin or doesn't produce enough insulin.

Either form of Diabetes can cause instances of lowered blood sugar levels or elevated blood sugar levels even when properly maintained with diet, exercise and medication. This can be dangerous and should be regulated. Symptoms of high blood sugar can include thirst, frequent urination, moodiness, tiredness, nausea and vomiting. Symptoms of low blood sugar can include shakiness, sweating, dizziness, confusion and hunger.

Due to the increase in diabetes in the United States, the odds are that most Girl Scouts know someone with diabetes.

If a Girl Scout has Type 1 Diabetes they will have to take insulin. This may be in the form of an insulin pump or multiple daily injections. If a Girl Scout has Type 2 Diabetes they may take insulin or may regulate their blood sugar in the form of an orally taken pill. They should be testing her blood sugar as well. This can be done using a glucometer or through a device on her body called a continuous glucose monitor. Glucose tablets, juice and fruit snacks are commonly used to treat a low blood sugar. For severe low blood sugar, glucagon should be administered.

Some suggestions and strategies for preparing for and including girls with Diabetes in your troop:

1. Consult with the Girl Scout's parent/guardian beforehand about any medications or medical equipment that may need to be present with the girl or adult during meetings – be clear about how and when to administer the medication or treatment and be sure it's being stored in a safe location away from general accessibility of the girls.
2. Ask the parent/guardian to provide you with ideas and instructions about what foods/snacks to serve and when to serve it (frequency) – following her special dietary needs is very important to avoid instances of lowered or elevated blood sugar levels.
3. Unless the Girl Scout and their parent/guardian prefer confidentiality within the troop, encourage them to share their care needs and ways the troop can support her. Provide an opportunity for the other Girl Scouts to ask questions in a respectful and caring environment. This will promote better understanding and allow everyone to work together as a troop to ensure that everyone's needs are met.
4. Always consult with the parent/guardian beforehand to be sure you're providing for the Girl Scout's needs to the best of your ability – they will know the best methods and strategies to help their child.



5. Work with the parent/guardian to understand which aspects of care the Girl Scout can manage on their own and how to support them in fostering independence.

For more help and information please visit Children's Diabetes Foundation

<https://childrensdiabetesfoundation.org/what-is-diabetes/>

If you have any other questions or concerns you may contact GSCO via email

inquiry@gscolorado.org at or via phone at 877-404-5708

This document is not intended to replace or supersede any doctor's instructions nor should it in any way be taken as medical advice or directions. This resource is a suggestion for GSCO volunteers to use while welcoming girls with special needs to their troops and is for informational and educational purposes only. Please follow a parent/guardian's instructions in the medical care of their child and make sure you always have the appropriate medical and troop permission forms completed and available for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel.