

Hi, my name is Lincoln...and I have Type 1 diabetes.



Today I will be talking about living with Type 1 diabetes.



Throughout my speech I would like the audience to feel ***heart-warmed***, because as a person living with Type 1 diabetes, I truly believe that no matter what challenges life might give you... *we still have the power to achieve our hopes and dreams no matter what might happen to us.*



In Australia, Diabetes Awareness Week is from 12th-18th July, which is during our school holidays.

However, it is important for everyone to be aware that diabetes is a lifelong condition.



There are two types of diabetes which are known as:

- Type 1 and
- Type 2 diabetes.

Both types are called a chronic condition.

Chronic means that you have the condition for your whole life.



Type 2 diabetes is a lot different to Type 1 diabetes.

Type 2 diabetes often occurs due to lifestyle factors, and is most common in older adults.

People with Type 2 diabetes can make lifestyle changes to manage their symptoms, as their body still produces insulin. For example, monitoring their food intake, exercise, or diet.



I have Type 1 diabetes which means that one of the organs in my body called the pancreas has completely stopped producing insulin.

Type 1 diabetes is not linked to lifestyle factors, and can occur at any age.



I was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes in Year One.

Being so young, and being hospitalised when I was in Year One, I felt very scared at the time because the nurses had such big needles that they had to keep injecting me with.



Inside the needle is a life-saving liquid called insulin, which is a type of chemical I need to keep me alive.

The insulin helps to manage my blood sugar levels.



I have to be injected by a needle at least three times per day, every day, to keep me alive and safe.



When I was younger I needed help to inject myself, but as I got older I am now able to inject myself.

Eventually you become used to the needles, and they don't really hurt as much anymore.



But where do I keep these needles?



You will notice that I am always carrying a black bag over my shoulder.

Inside this black bag I carry:

- my insulin needle
- my phone, which is used to read my blood sugar
- jelly beans in case my levels go below 4.0
- and some other things that I need to keep me safe.



The reason I carry a mobile phone in my black bag is not to make phone calls or to order pizzas to the school!



My phone is used to track my blood sugar levels 24 hours a day.

The phone is connected to a different type of technology called a sensor, which I wear on the top of my left arm.



The sensor looks like a big round band-aid.

Most kids just think it is a big band-aid, but if you see a person with what looks like a big round band-aid on their arm, leg, or stomach then it is likely that this is a diabetic sensor.



So what happens to me if my blood sugar levels are not managed well?!?



There are two things that can happen.

One of these is called a 'hypo' which is when my levels go below 4.0 on my sensor.



You will know I am having a hypo because my sensor will make an alarm sound.

You will also know I am having a hypo when:

- Sometimes I act sillier than normal
- Sometimes I might get mad or lose control of my emotions
- My face goes pale and I start to feel pale.
- I start to feel dizzy and my knees start to jolt
- I can't walk in a straight line.

If you see any of these things happening to me, please get a teacher or an adult because this means that I need immediate help.



When the teachers come over to help me with a hypo, they will give me a form of sugar such as a juice or some jelly beans.

After having some form of sugar, my hypo begins to go away, and my levels come back up above 4.0.

And then in a little while I am back to normal.



Untreated hypos can be very dangerous for your health.



Diabetes is sometimes called an invisible condition, because it's not obvious to other people what is happening inside my body.



Therefore, I am hoping that from this speech...the people in the audience will also know signs to look out for to help me if I am having a 'hypo'.



The opposite of a low 'hypo' is when your blood sugar levels go high, and is called a 'hyper'.



The signs of a hyper are when:

- I get a headache
- I don't want to do anything
- I feel tired
- I can feel sick
- I get really thirsty and want to drink water.



The treatment for a hyper is to have insulin which helps to bring my blood sugar levels down to normal again.



Sometimes you can manage high levels by doing lots of activity so that your body burns the glucose naturally. Glucose comes out in your sweat.



As I said earlier, having Type 1 diabetes doesn't stop anyone from achieving their dreams.

There are lots of famous people who are Type 1 diabetics.

Often people with Type 1 diabetes develop very positive habits which help them to be amazingly fit and strong.



Above all, I hope that my speech will inspire any younger students who are diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes.



If this does ever happen to you or someone you know, please let them know that they have an older buddy in me who can help and guide them.



Having Type 1 diabetes can be scary at the start, but it can also be an opportunity to make a positive difference by being open and helping to educate others about what life is like for a Type 1 diabetes person.



If anyone wants to ask me questions or learn more about diabetes, please come up and say hello to me in the yard.

I am a very friendly person who is able to answer any questions that you might have.



Thank you to everyone from USPS for listening to my speech, and for helping me to feel proud of who I am.