

2023

# CAMP GUIDE

**D** CAMPS



**DIABETES**  
**CANADA**

**D** CAMPS

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# A GUIDE TO DIABETES CANADA'S D-CAMPS...

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# A LETTER TO CAMPERS AND FAMILIES

Dear Camper and Family,

You are about to embark on an amazing adventure at camp this summer. We are so excited that you will be joining us! This year, you will have the opportunity to meet new friends, try exciting, new activities and learn more about your diabetes.

Camp is an exciting and fun-filled place, packed with new friends, adventures, songs, campfires, games, and many other unforgettable experiences.

This Camp Guide is going to help you understand the things about D-Camps that are consistent across the country, such as our policies and philosophies. For camp specific information about pick-up times, locations, and packing lists, please visit our website to review the Camp Information Guide for the camp your child is attending.

It is very common for both children and their parents/guardians to have feelings of anxiety and nervousness prior to the start of camp. This is a normal part of the process. We hope that once you

have read through this Camp Guide and have taken a look at the Information Guide specific to your camp, you will have a clear picture of what to expect at camp.

The goal of our D-Camps programs is to create a sense of belonging and community in which children, youth, and families living with type 1 diabetes learn skills to manage their condition, while feeling supported and connected.

If you have any questions or concerns after you have read this guide, please do not hesitate to contact us at [camps@diabetes.ca](mailto:camps@diabetes.ca).

Sincerely,

The D-Camps Team!

## THE GOAL OF D-CAMPS

- Teach independent self-management of diabetes
- Nurture lasting friendships
- Improve self-esteem
- Provide a safe, fun, and educational camp experience



# ABOUT D-CAMPS

## DIABETES CANADA'S CAMP PROGRAM

Diabetes Canada's camping tradition began in 1953 in Eastern Ontario. Since that time, our camp program has grown extensively, and the organization currently operates nine overnight camp programs across Canada. From the beginning, the focus of Diabetes Canada's camping program has been to provide children living with type 1 diabetes the opportunity to enjoy an authentic camp experience in a medically accommodating environment, with a dedicated team of professionals.

Our campers get the chance to meet and interact with other children and staff living with type 1 diabetes – what a great opportunity! Many of these relationships develop into lifelong friendships with others facing similar challenges. Through attending camp, we are confident your child will gain independence in managing their diabetes and feel empowered to continue the healthy practices they learn at camp and know that they are not alone in living with type 1 diabetes.

At Diabetes Canada, we believe that our camp and youth programs are for all children and youth living with type 1 diabetes regardless of ability, colour, ethnicity, exceptionality, gender identity or expression, race, religion, and/or sexual orientation.

If you have any questions about how we can best support your child at our programs, please contact the Camp Director in your region, using the contact information at the end of this Camp Guide. We would be happy to discuss how we can best accommodate you and your camper to have a great experience.



To ensure that we can provide the best experience to all of our participants we ask that families complete all registration forms as fully and truthfully as possible. The more we know about our participants the better we can support their needs.

At D-Camps, we strive to create equal opportunities for individuals that may identify or be affiliated with any number of biological, social, and cultural categories. Additionally, D-Camps aims to be open and accessible to all participants, ensuring that identification and/or affiliation with the above categories does not act as a barrier, obstacle, or deterrent that presents a child from experiencing a traditional overnight summer camp experience. D-Camps aims to create and foster a more comfortable and fun environment, free of harassment, discrimination, hostility, isolation and any other afflictions of systematic oppression. Participants and families are welcome to speak to the Camp Director if any accommodations are needed, which will remain confidential. In addition to this, many general inclusive policies are in place to ensure the camp environment and culture is inclusive and supportive for any participants, staff, and volunteers, who have not readily indicated any specific identity or affiliation prior to the start of their involvement in our programs.

If you have any questions about the fit of your child at our programs, please contact your Camp Director to discuss the support we can provide.

## VISITOR'S POLICY

Camp is a unique opportunity for your camper to develop independence in a supportive environment. It may be tempting to visit your child while they are at camp, but in our experience, this can be disruptive and create more challenges than benefits for your camper and those around them. If a visit to camp is required due to unforeseen circumstances, please contact the D-Camps team prior to your arrival, for us to prepare appropriately. Our team also hosts information sessions, and/or Open Houses where available for our camp programs prior to the summer. This is a great chance to learn more about our facilities, the programming, and ask any questions to prepare for the exciting summer ahead.

## PACKING LISTS

A common question we receive is "what should I pack for camp?" or "how can I prepare for my camp experience?" First, you will find a full packing list for each of our programs in your camp specific handbook. These are available online and will be emailed to all camp registrants in advance. Including your camper in the packing process can be an awesome way to prepare for the camp experience. Picking out some favourite pieces while reminding your camper what was packed, and where.

If your camper happens to forget something, don't sweat. We make sure to always have extras on hand for the essentials at camp, such as toothbrushes, toothpaste, and other toiletries.

Of course, we highly encourage folks to label items they bring to camp to avoid items being left behind!



# ABOUT OUR STAFF

## PROGRAM STAFF

Every year, Diabetes Canada recruits, screens, and trains a staff team focused on ensuring the best possible experience for your camper. Every member of the seasonal staff team has been interviewed by a member of the management team, has two current references on file, has First Aid and CPR training, and has completed a background check with Diabetes Canada. All staff participates in a pre-season training program, led by full-time members of the D-Camps Team. The training program is designed so that all members of the staff team are equipped to teach the program areas at our facilities, are knowledgeable about Diabetes Canada policies and procedures, and are ready to help your camper get the most from their experience attending a D-Camp. Staff are also trained by the Medical Director on type 1 diabetes, how to test blood sugars, and how to recognize and treat low/high blood glucose levels. Many of our staff team live with type 1 diabetes and are living in the cabin group with your camper. As we provide constant supervision, this creates endless opportunities for your camper to learn and relate to a young adult role-model living with type 1 diabetes.

## MEDICAL STAFF

Our medical staff team consists of physicians, nurses, and registered dietitians. These professionals provide top-notch medical care to the campers and staff and are a key part of the operation of D-Camps; they are always on hand for your camper. Whether you are new to diagnosis, or your camper is approaching adulthood, they are a great resource. They are also there to support with hands-on diabetes care where needed, such as supporting with insulin pump site and/or sensor changes.



# MEDICAL SUPERVISION AT CAMP

Your child's health is one of our key priorities at camp. Our team of Doctors, Diabetes Educators, Registered Nurses, and Registered Dietitians are dedicated to the wellbeing of your child. This includes helping your child to manage their diabetes, as well as looking after other medical needs as required.

## BLOOD GLUCOSE MONITORING

Generally speaking, campers are much more active at camp than when they are at school or home. This new schedule may make it more challenging to maintain blood glucose levels.

Please note that **all blood glucose monitoring supplies are provided for campers while at camp**. Campers will monitor their blood glucose using meters, single-use lancets, and test strips that are all provided by D-Camps. We are able to provide these supplies through the generous support of our industry partners. This allows for the highest level of blood glucose reading consistency while at camp. Blood checks are supervised by D-Camps staff members and any assistance required by your camper will be accommodated. Please see below for more information related to our Continuous Glucose Monitoring Policy (CGM).

## NIGHT-TIME BLOOD GLUCOSE TESTING

Your child's blood glucose is checked before bed, and children whose blood glucose is out of a safe range will be checked and treated throughout the night by trained staff. We recognize campers' need for quality sleep, and our medical team works very hard to minimize any disruption to campers' sleep. Our staff makes every attempt to complete nighttime checking and treatment in cabin and without waking campers. There may be situations where campers must be woken up to be checked or treated and isolated situations where campers may have to spend time in the Health Centre to ensure blood glucose levels stabilize to be within a safe range.



## MEDICATIONS

If your child uses any medication other than insulin, please be sure to send the necessary amount for their stay at camp. All medication **MUST** be in its original container, with a clear label identifying the medication, medication dose and your child's name on it. Upon arrival at camp, please check in all your campers' medication with the Medical Staff Team and clarify any dosage details such as time, amounts, or any other specifications.



## DIABETES EDUCATION

The opportunity to meet, learn, and play with other people living with type 1 diabetes is of enormous benefit. Older campers and staff members living with type 1 provide role models for younger campers who are developing confidence in managing their diabetes.

Learning opportunities happen everywhere at camp - whether it's a doctor discussing insulin dosages, a dietician ensuring a meal plan is just right, or a cabin group discussing different types of insulin pumps. The sense of community created by being surrounded by people with type 1 diabetes is an amazing aspect of the D-Camps experience.

## BEDWETTING

Bed-wetting is a common occurrence at camp. As our counsellors sleep in the same cabin as their campers, there is always a friendly face available to help change bedding in the middle of the night. In the morning, bedding will be bundled up discreetly and taken to our laundry area for washing. If your child has a history of bed-wetting, talk to your child about what to do if they wet the bed while at camp. Please send extra sheets and blankets for bedding, as they are much easier to wash than a sleeping bag and consider sending pull-ups if this is a strategy you would like us to use for your child while at camp.

## MISSING HOME

Missing home is a common, normal, and healthy experience for many children. While at camp, your camper will be supported by excellent staff who are trained to work with your camper around their anxieties of being away from home and help them to be more comfortable at camp. If you suspect that your child may become homesick while at camp, please consider these helpful hints:

- **Encourage your child's independence throughout the year.** Before camp, try to have your child sleep over at a friend or family member's house.
- If your child thinks that you are unsure about camp, they will become unsure themselves.  
**Be confident!**
- Acknowledge that you will miss your child but **emphasize the fun they will have while away.** For example, you can say "I am going to miss you, but I know that you will have a good time at camp. We are so excited you get to go to camp".
- **Don't bribe.** Linking a successful stay at camp to a material object sends the wrong message. The reward should be your child's new-found confidence and independence.
- **Pack a personal item from home,** such as a stuffed animal.
- Generally, we discourage campers from calling home. In the vast majority of cases, this only increases the feeling of homesickness that campers experience. **Please do not promise your child that they can call home from camp or arrange a day you will agree to pick them up early.**
- **Our D-Camps Family Camp program may be a good introduction** to our camping program and may give your child a better understanding of what they will do at camp for week while possibly making new camp friends. It is also great for adults who are nervous about sending their child to camp for all the same reasons while making connections for the entire family.





# BEHAVIOUR AT CAMP

## AWESOME BEHAVIOUR AT CAMP

The focus of our camp is on teaching independence and self-management of type 1 diabetes, facilitating friendships, and improving the self-esteem of our campers, all in a safe, fun, and educational setting. To ensure all campers get the most out of camp, we expect everybody to:

- ✓ Cooperate with staff, volunteers, and fellow participants
- ✓ Treat everybody at camp, along with the facility and environment with respect
- ✓ Have a positive attitude
- ✓ Try new things
- ✓ Follow camp rules, including activity rules, cabin rules and all camp rules
- ✓ Ask questions when unsure or if needing some extra support

## UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR AT CAMP

To ensure a positive experience for all campers, inappropriate, aggressive or abusive behavior is unacceptable while at camp. Campers who display any of the following behaviour will be asked to stop. If the behavior continues after being spoken to by their counsellor, the Camp Director will speak with the camper. The Camp Director may call home to consult parents/guardians about the behavior, and every effort will be taken to coach positive behavior. If a camper is unwilling to change their behavior, the Camp Director may have to ask the camper to leave the program. No refunds will be provided for campers who are asked to leave due to behavioural concerns, and guardians are responsible for picking up their camper if this occurs.



# D-CAMPS POLICIES

## BULLYING AT CAMP

**At camp, bullying is not acceptable and will not be tolerated.**

Unfortunately, people who are bullied may not have the same opportunity to get the most out of their camp experience. Our camp staff is trained to deal with bullying and will work with campers to prevent it at camp. If bullying does occur while at camp, we will treat the situation seriously. If a camper bullies another camper, they will be asked to stop, and provided strategies to change their behaviour. If their behaviour does not change after our staff team employs various strategies, the Camp Director may ask the camper to leave the program. In this scenario, the Camp Director will coordinate pick up logistics with the parent/guardian of the camper. No refunds will be provided for campers who are asked to leave due to behavioural concerns, and guardians are responsible for picking up their camper if this occurs.

## CAMP IS AN UN-PLUGGED COMMUNITY

And we are proud of it!

We believe strongly that part of a healthy camp experience is providing campers with the opportunity to strengthen their sense of independence. D-Camp programs emphasize community living in a supportive and healthy natural setting. Electronic devices often remove or detach a camper from this community and natural setting.

Our experience is that campers thrive best at D-Camps when they learn to develop relationships and negotiate challenges with those around them. We believe that the success of each child at D-Camps is greatly enhanced through the absence of electronic devices.

*"The artificial needs created by new electronic technologies – to see and hear everything the instant it happens – are not always developmentally appropriate needs for our children. To wait a few days for a traditional letter to arrive gives parents and children alike the time to reflect, form new relationships, solve problems independently and understand their emotions. In these ways, unplugging the digital umbilical promotes health growth and self-reliance."*

Dr. Christopher Thurber, Child Psychologist

Digital Cameras are the **only** non-medical electronic devices permitted at camp. Smartphones **cannot** be used as digital cameras while at camp, even if the phone is being used as part of your campers continuous glucose monitoring needs.



At camp, non-medical electronic devices are **not permitted**. These include:

- × Cell phones/smartphones
- × Hand-held gaming devices, laptops, and/or tablets
- × iPods or MP3 players
- × Any other non-medical electronic device
- × Electronic devices will be removed from campers and held in the Camp Office until the end of camp. D-Camps and Diabetes Canada will not be responsible for damage or loss of electronic devices at camp.

## CONTINUOUS GLUCOSE MONITORING POLICY

We welcome CGM (continuous glucose monitoring) and FGM (flash glucose monitoring) devices and technologies which are approved by Health Canada at D-Camps. ***Devices and systems that are yet to be approved by Health Canada cannot be used at D-Camps.*** As with all of our policies and procedures, it is important to note that we are bound by Health Canada guidelines on all products and strive to comply with the Diabetes Canada Clinical Practice Guidelines (CPG). We are not able to use non-Health Canada approved devices at D-Camps.

While at camp, all campers using CGM will continue to receive the same high-quality monitoring and medical attention as in previous years. CGM campers' blood glucose (BG) readings will be tracked both from the sensor reading and finger pokes as appropriate to their device. Medical staff will incorporate the information obtained from CGM and FGM devices as we make ongoing treatment decisions during camp. Campers will be required to change their sensors as per the guidelines outlined by Health Canada; please pack appropriately. We recognize many campers use CGM/FGM technology while at home and continuing to use this at camp can create consistency in care and help with the transition to a new environment.

As camp is an un-plugged community, it is important to note that all broadcasting features or pairing to caregiver functions are not allowed (ex: Night Scout technology, Dario's, Dexcom Follow App, iPhones with multiple recipient featured enabled, etc). Campers who use smartphone technology with their Dexcom devices will be required to take out their SIM card at check in. SIM cards may also be removed at home prior to opening day at camp. SIM cards that are removed at camp will either be given to the guardian at drop off, or stored at camp and returned to the camper prior to departing on the last day.

D-Camps and Diabetes Canada will not be responsible for damaged or lost transmitters or receivers.

## WHAT NOT TO BRING TO CAMP

The following items are not allowed at camp:

- × Alcohol, non-prescriptions drugs, drugs not prescribed to the camper, tobacco products
- × Cigarettes, electronic vaping devices
- × Knives, including camping or Swiss army knives
- × Valuable or precious items
- × Matches or lighters
- × Food, snacks, or drinks
- × Non-medical electronics with the exception of digital cameras.





*"When we picked up our son he was the happiest we have seen him in a year, he had a smile on his face for days. He also doesn't care if people know he has diabetes which has been a struggle since diagnosis 3 years ago."*

## **CAMP REGISTRATION POLICY**

To ensure that we can serve as many children with type 1 diabetes as possible during our summer camp programs, children will only be able to register to attend one summer camp program.

Should a child register at one summer camp program and then also register for others, they will be moved into a waitlist for the subsequent programs and given a spot if one should become available.

### ***Why?***

We are excited to see that our programs are popular and that children want to attend multiple types of the same program. However, we want as many children as possible to experience the benefits of D-Camps. As such, we'd like to see spots filled by children that have not yet had an opportunity to attend a program.

## CAMP FEES

The cost for one week of a D-Camp is approximately \$2500. We do not ask you to pay that cost. D-Camps offers every camper a fee that is below our cost to operate because Diabetes Canada strongly believes in the value of our D-Camps programs for those living with type 1 diabetes.

We know that our camp fees can be a barrier for some families. To assist those who cannot pay the camp fee we have a financial assistance program. When registering online please check the 'Requesting Financial Assistance' box in the payment field. You will then be asked to provide some information about your financial circumstances and to send us some supporting documentation. This allows Diabetes Canada to ensure we are providing appropriate support when it is needed in a consistent way across the country.

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE POLICY

To help make camp a possibility for as many families as possible, we are only able to offer a subsidy for one of each type of program. *Example: One summer camp and one family camp.* If there should be an opportunity to attend more than one of the same program, a camper/family would not be eligible to receive a subsidy for the second program.

**Why?** This policy enables Diabetes Canada to provide financial assistance to more individual families and help get as many people to camp as possible.

## CAMP PAYMENT POLICY

**All D-Camp Registrations must be paid for or have an established payment plan in place prior to the first day of camp.**

For the 2023 season, any new program registrations with balances owing on the account from 2022 will be transferred to the waitlist until the balance is paid off.

**Why?** It is important that Diabetes Canada uses donated dollars as prudently as possible. This includes having a very clear sense of the financial assistance required for the D-Camps community. Outstanding balances add time, work and uncertainty for our staff.

## CANCELLATION/REFUND POLICY

Camp fees (less deposit) are fully refundable. Notification of cancellation is required in writing or via email and must be received by the **Camp Administrative Coordinator** no later than four weeks prior to the camp start date in order to receive a refund, minus processing fee of \$100. Cancellation requests made later than four weeks prior to camp will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If a child has to leave camp for unforeseen circumstances, please discuss refund options with the D-Camps staff team.

Please note that cancellations must be made directly through the Camp Administrative Coordinator and cannot be made through regional offices or other Diabetes Canada staff. Families who do not cancel will still be required to pay the balance of their camp fees.

**If you decide to cancel your camp registration or have questions about registering, please contact us at: [camps@diabetes.ca](mailto:camps@diabetes.ca) or 1-800-BANTING**





## D-CAMPS STORE

D-Camps clothing and merchandise is created for campers and their families to show their support year-round for D-Camps and demonstrates the culture of type 1 diabetes-related confidence and empowerment that we encourage at camps. The 2023 D-Camps merchandise and clothing will be emailed and posted ahead of time on our social media platforms to provide families with an opportunity to see what is available. We do our best to provide a variety of options that cater to all styles, preferences and price points.

There will be an opportunity to try on, test out, and purchase camp merchandise onsite at camp when you drop-off and pick-up your camper.

**Credit cards** are the only accepted methods of payment when purchasing items on drop-off or pick-up days.

# WHY D-CAMPS?

Type 1 diabetes introduces kids to a new reality, one that often makes them feel different from their friends. For many kids, there is no one else in their school or community who has type 1, and it can be a struggle to acknowledge diabetes openly.

At D-Camps however, campers get a break from being different. Camp is one of the few places where everyone just “gets it”, where the world runs on “diabetes time” and nothing has to be explained. Campers will meet other children who share a personal understanding of the challenges that come from living with type 1, and many of these relationships develop into lifelong friendships. When children leave camp, they will have gained a new level of independence in managing their diabetes and feel empowered to continue the healthy practices they learned at camp.

The goal of the Diabetes Canada D-Camps program is to create a sense of belonging and community in which children, youth and families living with type 1 diabetes learn skills to manage their condition, while feeling supported and connected.

We look forward to connecting with you and your family at D-Camps this 2023 season!

If you have any questions about what to expect at your Diabetes Canada D-Camp, please feel free to reach out to our Camp Directors.

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