

No Added Sugar - growing up with type 1 diabetes

Fibi Ward



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Fibi Ward, now 14, writes: 'At the time I was diagnosed [aged 13], I wanted to read something written by somebody of my own age, from their perspective, about how they dealt with being diagnosed, and to reassure myself that all the fears and worries that I had were normal. However,I have not seen any such book on the market and have decided to record my own experiences so that other children and teenagers who are newly diagnosed with type 1 diabetes can get some benefit and comfort by reading about and relating to them.'

According to Diabetes UK, 10,000 to 15,000 people in the UK are diagnosed with type 1 diabetes every year. The peak age of diagnosis is between 10 and 14 years. Coming so early in life, such a diagnosis can feel like a life sentence, both for the young person and for their family.

'I was scared about returning to school, 'continues Fibi, 'and I didn't want anyone at all to know that I was diabetic. Also, I feared that I would never have a boyfriend because I would be different to all the other girls in my class. I was even frightened about going to bed in case I became hypoglycaemic in the night and never woke up. These are just a few of the anxieties I had, some of which may seem silly but which were a big deal at the time. I hope that by reading my book other people will be reassured that there is no need to worry about these things and that they will gain some comfort from knowing they are not the only ones who have been through it.'

'I have also included some humorous anecdotes because it isn't all doom and gloom, and there are practical tips, for example on doing insulin injections, going to sleepovers and parties and doing P.E. and sports. I do not claim to be a medical expert, but my diabetic nurse has checked everything and made some helpful suggestions.'

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