



## **Type 1 diabetes - a long-term condition**

### *Diabetes and exhaustion*

With diabetes when you're tired it's not just feeling tired, it's a case of feeling that exhausted that you just can't go on so you're tired, but it's not a case of oh, I can just well carry on just for the sake of it, I'll, I'll sleep when I get home, you have to sleep at that stage, or even if you can't sleep, you just have to rest. So I'd be tired after school, I'd have to go and have a sleep, and then I'd have to sleep again within a couple of hours, you know throughout the night, to be able to carry on the next day. And it's not a case of once you've slept you feel better because it's a case of you sleep, you feel like you can get up, but then you'll be tired again within a few hours. You always feel tired, you never really feel, you know, like you can go out and do things, and have the energy to do what your friends are doing, or go out dancing, or anything like that. You just can do the basics, and then that's it, and it is a struggle to even do the basics sometimes.

Going to school for me was very difficult at points. Sometimes I'd have to just have a day off because I was too tired to go in, and I think teachers as well had to be quite understanding because it was a case of not always being able to get my work done on time, getting very stressed out because I couldn't, I couldn't do it, I was just too tired, it was all too much for me. And it's sort of a cycle of you get very tired, you can't do something, and then when you haven't done that the stress increases and there's something else to do, and you still haven't done the thing you were meant to do before, so I would describe it more as fatigue than just tiredness.

I've been much better for about a year, since getting the pump, so I would now class myself as normal in terms of my health my sugar levels are at a really good level, and I went to a festival, I went to Bestival in September and I'd never really been able to do things like that before, but I thought I'd give it a go, but it was still really exhausting. I managed to have a really good time but it was a case of as soon as the bands finished I had to go to bed, whereas my friends would carry on going out until the early hours of the morning. I would have to have a full night's sleep and then when we were watching bands I would have to go and sit down, I would have to go and rest. I have to have the disabled pass, I have to be able to sleep somewhere where I can get a good night's sleep. I need to have the disabled stand, and people don't always understand that because you look well and you, you don't look like you're disabled and, in a way, I'm not disabled but the tiredness does disable me in some ways, so I'd be spending a lot of time at the festival sitting on the stand just watching the band

and my friends would just leave me and, and go off and do their own thing because it's boring to have to sit with someone and, and watch them while they're tired, sitting on a disabled stand. But it also meant that I was on my own quite a lot, and that's something that I've had to deal with, sort of looking after myself and accepting that I have to let other people go and do their thing, and accept that I can only do so much, and try and still enjoy my life, whilst having that slight difficulty.