



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

### *Difficulties with diabetes*

A hypo is short for hypoglycemic attack, it's what happens when your blood sugar dips below 4 millimoles. I think everyone's symptoms vary, personally I get very shaky, I get very sweaty, I feel a bit dizzy, and then as they get worse obviously you feel more dizzy, sometimes the room starts spinning around, you begin to feel quite weak and you're desperate to get some sugar.

I had one at work once, I said to my manager that I needed to take about ten minutes to have some sugar and sort myself out, but she thought again that I was just trying to pull a fast one and have a, a break when I wasn't entitled to one, so for the rest of the day she was in a foul mood with me.

Other people's reactions are quite difficult. They are usually to do with the process of injecting or almost even once when you say I'm diabetic they think it just means that you can't have sugar, or they say things like are you the type that can't have sugar or the type that needs sugar, or the other one you get often is oh, you're diabetic, why aren't you fat then? They get very repetitive and it feels like every time you introduce the fact that you're diabetic you're answering the same old questions, which I guess people's inquisitiveness, is a good thing but it does get a bit repetitive, and it makes life a bit harder to fit in.

I've only ever hidden it once, when I was in New York, I was volunteering at Columbia University and I didn't tell them before I was going that I was diabetic, and I didn't tell them within the first few days, and then I didn't want to drop it in after that so I actually hid it from them for about eight weeks.

I've never really suffered from getting really down due to my diabetes. I'd like to think of myself as quite a happy go lucky person. However there are times when I've been really poorly controlled for maybe a few days or a week, two weeks, or when you have like your three monthly blood test to tell you your average blood sugar, and that doesn't come back what you were hoping it would come back as. You do begin to feel a bit sad and a bit almost depressed about it.

And sometimes I ended up feeling down for two or three days, and it's almost a bit of a vicious circle because when you're feeling down you don't feel like looking after your diabetes as much anyway so I guess that just makes everything a bit worse.

I usually just get through that by sitting it out. I get lots of encouragement from the people around me, so my girlfriend, my parents are usually quite encouraging in those times, but apart from that I just sweat it out for a few days and then wake up feeling a bit better.