

ASK THE ATHLETE

A Resource for Active People with Diabetes



Lewis Finnegan, Basketball

About Me: I was born and raised in Lexington, Massachusetts. I was diagnosed with diabetes in 1996 I always had been a very active child and even after my diagnoses I was back playing sports within a few days. I recently graduated from Bentley University and played basketball there for 4 years.

My FAQs	My Response
1. Do you have a formula for how you adjust your insulin for running (or exercise)?	The formula I use for exercise, like basketball or weightlifting, is to drop my basal rate roughly a quarter of my normal rate of 1.2 units per hour. If I am being active but not doing anything intense; I may drop my basal rate down to 75% of my normal rate. If it is a day where I have a game, I test my blood 2-3 times more, just to keep my levels in the range of 90-1120.
2. My blood sugars are almost always high right after a race; why does this happen and how can I fix this problem?	I have run into similar problems with my blood sugar after basketball games. I tend to run in the 300s after an intense game. However, I do only take 25-30% of my normal correction unless it is in the 400s. My goal is 100 and my correction ratio is 1:25. Another thing I tried was to take a small dose of Lantus insulin in the morning. I cut my daily basal rate by a percentage and took the rest in a shot. This helped because it always kept a reserve supply of insulin in my body.
3. How do you know when/how much carbohydrate to take in when you're running (or exercising)? What do you use for extra carbs?	The only way to really know when or how much carbs to take is by testing your blood. During games or practice, I try to test my blood at least once. During games, it is usually at halftime unless it was low or high going into the game. For extra carbs, I use Gatorade. Although it is heavy, half a bottle is only 14 carbs and I really enjoy the Frost flavor. Its sole purpose is for the body to consume it quickly so it works very well when my blood levels are low during a game.
4. Should I switch to an insulin pump for running?	I switched to an insulin pump because my exercising was increasing exponentially during middle school and high school. I went from playing basketball recreationally to playing non-stop. With the amount of games I was playing and along with my schedule getting crazier, I had to. I switched to a pump because it allowed me switch to an irregular eating schedule while tightening my control. My A1C dropped from in the 8s to the low 7s.

BE ACTIVE! BE FIT! BE HEALTHY!

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