

# 40 Years With Type II Diabetes

## *And I'm Still Kicking*

Real-life experiences — four decades living with diabetes

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*Living with insulin-dependent Type II diabetes since 1985*

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If you were just diagnosed and everything feels overwhelming —  
take a breath.

This short guide shares the practical experiences, routines, mistakes, and small habits  
that helped me live a full life with diabetes for more than forty years.

No scare tactics.

No miracle cures.

Just real experience.



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*(Forty years, tens of thousands of injections, and still occasionally arguing with dessert.)*

## 40 Years With Type II Diabetes

### And I'm Still Kicking (Sometimes Higher Than I Should)

Let's get one thing out of the way immediately:

If you were just diagnosed and you're scared — that's normal.

If you're overwhelmed — also normal.

If your brain is already imagining worst-case scenarios — completely normal.

I've been living with Type II diabetes since 1985.

So if you're newly diagnosed and wondering whether life continues — I'm living proof that it does.

Back then:

- no apps
- no CGMs (Continuous Glucose Monitor)
- needles looked like harpoons
- and the internet didn't exist to scare you properly

I was told I'd need insulin injections every day. — Forever.

Not exactly the motivational speech of the year.

I hated needles.

I hated doctors.

I hated the word "forever."

But something interesting happened.

Two weeks in... the injections were just routine.

A month in... diabetes became part of daily life.

A year in... it wasn't the center of my world anymore.

Life didn't end.

It just... adjusted.

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### The Google Problem

One of the worst things you can do right after diagnosis is search the internet for:

"Diabetes complications"

Within ten minutes you'll be convinced your feet will fall off by Thursday and you'll lose your eyesight a couple of weeks later.

The internet tends to show the worst possible outcomes — not the millions of people quietly managing diabetes and living normal lives.

Information is useful.

Catastrophe spirals are not.

Focus on learning how **your body behaves**, not on every horror story online.

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## **What this guide is NOT**

This is not a medical textbook.

Not a lecture.

Not a “10 steps to reverse everything” miracle brochure.

You won't find:

- scare tactics
- guilt
- perfection preaching

Because none of that helps real people.

And by the way, Fact check first: I am neither a doctor providing advice nor am I telling you what to do. Things I describe worked for me and my situation. Yours may be different.

## **What this guide IS**

This is real-life survival knowledge from someone who has:

- taken tens of thousands of insulin shots
- eaten things I shouldn't
- had high readings
- had low readings
- ignored advice
- learned the hard way
- and still ended up living a full, functioning life

Diabetes didn't ruin my life.

If anything, it forced me to understand my body, build routines, and take responsibility — most of the time 😊

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## **The first truth nobody tells you**

Sure thing, Diabetes is serious.

But it is also:

manageable

livable

adaptable

And once routine replaces fear... it becomes part of life, not the definition of it.

You don't need perfection.

You need:

- consistency
- understanding
- and a sense of humor when numbers don't behave

Because sometimes...

they won't.

## **Why this guide exists**

Because when people are first diagnosed, they usually get one of two things:

1. cold medical information
2. internet horror stories

What they rarely get is this:

“You’re going to be okay.

Here’s how real people actually live with this.”

That’s what this is.

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## **Before we go further**

Take a breath.

You didn’t break yourself.

You’re not alone.

And this is not the end of your normal life.

It’s just the start of a new routine.

And routines... humans get very good at those.

Let’s walk through the parts nobody explained clearly.

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## **Myth vs Reality**

### **The stuff people say... and what actually happens**

When you’re diagnosed, advice comes from everywhere:

Doctors — friends — neighbors — the nurse girlfriend now turned refrigerator auditor  
the internet

that one guy who cured everything with cinnamon and a YouTube video

Some of it helps.

Some of it confuses.

Some of it is just wrong.

Let’s clear the air.

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### **Myth #1: “Your life is basically over.”**

#### **Reality:**

No, it isn’t.

You’ll still work.

Still travel.

Still eat.

Still argue with dessert and sometimes lose.

Diabetes changes routines — not your identity.

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**Myth #2: “You can never eat normal food again.”****Reality:**

Yes, you can — I eat just about everything

You just can't eat like your metabolism is 19 and bulletproof anymore.

Balance replaces impulse.

Planning replaces guessing. Reading package labels, scanning for ingredients and calories.

That's it.

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**Myth #3: “Just drink lots of water — flush the sugar out.”****Reality:**

Glucose isn't sitting in your bloodstream as sugar crystals waiting to be rinsed away.

Water helps hydration.

Your kidneys appreciate it.

But insulin, movement, and routine are what actually bring numbers down.

Water supports.

It doesn't fix.

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**Myth #4: “If your glucose goes high, you failed.”****Reality:**

No.

Sometimes you:

- eat more than planned
- misjudge timing
- get stressed
- sleep poorly
- or your body just decides to be difficult

Numbers are feedback.

Not judgment.

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**Myth #5: “There's one perfect diet that fixes everything.”****Reality:**

If there were, we'd all be on it. If you find one that works for you — great, go for it.

What works is:

- consistency
- learning your patterns
- adjusting over time

Not chasing miracle plans.

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**Myth #6: “Insulin means things got really bad.”****Reality:**

Insulin means your body needs help.

That’s it.

No shame.

No failure.

No drama.

Just treatment.

And after a while?

It becomes routine — like brushing your teeth, just less minty.

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**Myth #7: “You have to be perfect.”****Reality:**

Perfection is the fastest way to burn out.

What works long-term is:

- good habits
- reasonable control
- steady adjustments
- and patience

Forty years isn’t built on perfection.

It’s built on consistency.

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**Myth #8: “Someone you know always has a miracle cure.”****Reality:**

The moment people hear you have diabetes; the suggestions begin.

Someone’s uncle reversed it with cinnamon.

A neighbor swears by apple cider vinegar.

A coworker recommends a mysterious herb from the internet.

And someone else insists that eating nothing but kale and optimism fixes everything.

Everyone means well.

But diabetes isn’t managed by miracle tips.

It’s managed by daily habits, observation, and consistency.

If cinnamon solved diabetes, my kitchen would look like a bakery by now.

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## **The truth underneath all of this**

Diabetes isn't managed in heroic moments.

It's managed in small daily decisions:

- when you eat
- how you dose
- when you move
- when you adjust

And most importantly:

when you forgive yourself and keep going.

Because this is a long game.

And long games are won by people who stay steady — not people who try to be flawless.

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## **How I Actually Manage It Day-to-Day**

**(No magic. No hacks. Just what works.)**

After 40 years with Type II diabetes, my routine isn't fancy.

No cutting-edge tech.

No miracle protocols.

No influencer-level biohacking.

Just consistency.

And a willingness to adjust when I know I pushed things too far.

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## **The regimen**

Morning usually looks like this:

- Grab the Glucose monitor and check, depending on the reading i.e. 95
- Regular insulin (R): about 5-8 units
- NPH: about 15 units (that was and still is my standard after 40 years)
- Healthy breakfast, not too much

Evening:

- Regular insulin: 5–8 units
- NPH: 14–15 units

If I see a reading around 220?

I'll bump the Regular insulin a bit.

Not panic.

Not overcorrect.

Just adjust.

Because after enough years, you stop reacting emotionally and start responding practically.

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## **The “hamster wheel” method**

When numbers creep up:

- hydrate
- correction insulin
- 10–15 minutes of movement

Nothing extreme.

No marathon training.

No punishment workouts.

Just enough movement to let muscles pull glucose from the bloodstream.

It works.

Quietly. — Reliably.

And it beats sitting there staring at the meter hoping it fixes itself.

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## **The honest truth about high readings**

Here’s where most guides get polite.

I won’t.

Most of my high readings come from one thing:

I knowingly ate too much.

Not mystery. — Not bad luck. — Not sabotage.

Just good food... in generous quantities.

Sometimes the meal wins.

And instead of guilt, I correct, move, hydrate, and move on.

That’s long-term management.

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## **What decades teach you**

After a while, patterns become obvious:

- insulin timing matters more than perfection
- routine matters more than intensity
- consistency matters more than motivation

You stop chasing numbers.

You start understanding them.

A 220 isn’t panic.

It’s information.

It tells you:

- adjust
- move
- hydrate
- carry on

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### **The biggest shift over time**

In the beginning, everything feels urgent.

Every reading feels dramatic.

Every decision feels critical.

Years later?

Diabetes becomes background management.

Like:

checking fuel in a car

adjusting a thermostat

fixing something before it becomes a problem

Important — but not life-defining.

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### **What actually keeps this working**

Not perfection.

Just this:

- taking insulin consistently
- knowing how your body reacts
- staying moderately active
- correcting without overreacting
- and not quitting when numbers misbehave

Because they will. And that's normal.

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### **The part nobody expects**

Routine becomes freedom.

Once habits are in place, you stop thinking about diabetes all day.

You live.

You work.

You eat.

You travel.

You enjoy things.

And you manage the condition alongside life — not instead of it.

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A phrase I heard a long time ago and repeat every time a wrench hits my gears:

**Obstacles are these frightful things that you see when you take your eyes off the goal**  
*(I'd love to give someone credit for that line, but I honestly don't remember who said it.)*

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## **What I Wish Someone Told Me Right After Diagnosis**

Not the medical lecture.

Not the pamphlet.

Just the real, human version.

Because the first days after diagnosis are mostly fear, confusion, and too much information delivered too fast.

Here's what would've helped.

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### **First: you're going to be okay**

Not perfect.

Not instantly under control.

But okay.

This isn't a life-ending event.

It's a life-adjusting one.

And humans are remarkably good at adjusting.

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### **Second: fear fades, routine stays**

In the beginning:

everything feels urgent

everything feels scary

everything feels permanent

Then routine shows up.

You learn:

- when to eat
- when to dose
- when to move
- when to ignore panic

And life stabilizes.

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### **Third: your body responds to what you do repeatedly**

Not occasionally.

Not when motivation strikes.

Repeatedly.

Small habits beat heroic efforts.

Every time.

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#### **Fourth: weight matters — but not for the reasons people preach**

Let's be honest without being cruel.  
Extra weight doesn't help diabetes.  
It increases insulin resistance.  
It makes glucose harder to manage.  
And it puts real strain on the body.  
But the first things it wears out? Knees, Hips & Back.  
Mobility goes down.  
Movement gets harder.  
And movement is one of the simplest tools we have to help glucose.  
This isn't about appearance.  
It's about function.  
The goal isn't "look different."  
The goal is:

- move easier
- hurt less
- stay active longer

Because activity helps everything else work better.

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#### **Fifth: nobody manages this perfectly**

You'll have:  
great days  
frustrating days  
"why is this happening" days  
and "I definitely caused this" days  
That's normal.  
Progress beats perfection.

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#### **Sixth: learn your patterns, not someone else's rules**

Everybody responds differently.  
Some people spike from bread.  
Others from stress.  
Others from poor sleep.  
The real skill is observation.  
Once you see patterns:  
you stop guessing  
you start adjusting  
And control improves without drama.

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### **Seventh: humor helps more than panic**

You can treat diabetes like a daily crisis...  
or like a long-term maintenance project.

One burns you out.

The other keeps you steady.

After enough years, you realize:

calm consistency beats emotional intensity.

Every time.

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### **The message I wish I heard on day one**

You didn't fail.

You didn't break yourself.

You're not alone.

This is manageable.

And with time, knowledge, and routine...

it becomes part of life — not the center of it.

### **The Daily Habits That Actually Move the Needle**

**(Not dramatic. Just effective.)**

After decades of living with diabetes, the biggest improvements never came from one big change.

They came from small things done repeatedly.

No heroics.

No extremes.

Just habits.

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### **Habit #1: Timing matters more than intensity**

Insulin works on a clock.

Food works on a clock.

Your body works on a clock.

When those clocks line up, numbers behave.

When they don't... chaos.

Simple example:

Taking Regular insulin **well before** a meal instead of **with** the meal can prevent the spike entirely instead of chasing it later.

Not more insulin.

Better timing.

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## **Habit #2: Movement beats sitting**

You don't need intense workouts.

You need regular movement.

- 10–15 minutes after meals
- light activity during the day
- staying mobile

Muscles pull glucose from the bloodstream without needing as much insulin.

It's one of the simplest tools available — and one of the most overlooked.

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## **Habit #3: Hydration supports everything**

Water doesn't "flush sugar out."

But it helps:

- kidneys function properly
- circulation
- energy levels
- recovery

Hydration supports the system doing the work.

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## **Habit #4: Sleep affects glucose more than people think**

Poor sleep:

- increases insulin resistance
- raises stress hormones
- raises glucose

You can do everything "right" with food and insulin...

and one bad night of sleep still pushes numbers up.

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## **Habit #5: Stress shows up in your glucose**

The body doesn't separate "mental stress" and "physical stress."

It reacts the same way.

Stress hormones raise blood sugar — even if you didn't eat anything.

This confuses people early on.

Later, you recognize the pattern.

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## **Habit #6: Don't overcorrect**

One of the biggest mistakes early on:

see high number → panic → stack insulin → crash later

or crash in the middle of the night → over-compensate by eating half the cake from the day

before → wake up with 250+. Happened to me many times in the early years.

**Tip:** when you go hypoglycemic (low sugar like around 60) go easy on food, test how your body reacts. I'd start with a 6oz glass of OJ, wait 15 minutes or so, check glucose, if it's going up, I add maybe 1 cookie and go back to sleep. Testing this routing with your body behavior will benefit you in the long run big time!

Diabetes responds better to steady adjustments than emotional reactions.

Correct.

Wait.

Observe.

Adjust again if needed.

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## **Understanding A1C**

### **The long-term picture**

Daily readings are snapshots.

A1C is the movie.

It shows your **average glucose over about three months.**

Not:

- one meal
- one mistake
- one high day

The overall trend.

That's what doctors look at to understand long-term risk and control.

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## **Why A1C matters**

It reflects:

- how consistently glucose is managed
- long-term strain on the body
- overall diabetes stability

It's not about being perfect.

It's about being steady.

Small daily habits → better averages → better A1C.

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## **What people misunderstand about A1C**

A higher A1C doesn't mean failure.

It means:

- adjustments needed
- patterns shifting
- something worth paying attention to

It's feedback — not judgment.

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## **Supplements: Helpful sometimes, magic never**

Let's keep this realistic.

No supplement replaces:

- insulin
- medication
- movement
- routine

But some people do see support from certain additions when used sensibly and discussed with their healthcare provider.

Examples people commonly explore:

- magnesium
- omega-3 fatty acids
- vitamin D
- fiber support
- chromium

These don't "fix diabetes."

They support overall metabolism and health — which can indirectly help glucose management.

The key word: support.

Not substitute.

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## **The real foundation**

Supplements are optional.

Habits are not.

What consistently improves long-term stability:

- regular insulin use (if prescribed)
- movement
- reasonable eating patterns
- hydration
- sleep
- stress management
- pattern recognition

Not perfection.

Consistency.

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## **The quiet truth after years of doing this**

Control isn't built in big moments.

It's built in:

daily routines  
repeatable behaviors  
small corrections  
steady habits  
And the willingness to keep going when numbers don't cooperate.  
Because sometimes...  
they won't.  
And that's normal.

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## **The Long Game**

### **Living a Full Life With Diabetes**

Here's something that only becomes clear with time:  
Diabetes is not a sprint.  
It's maintenance.  
Like taking care of a car you plan to keep for decades.  
You don't panic every time the engine makes a sound.  
You pay attention.  
You adjust.  
You keep driving.

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## **Life doesn't stop**

You'll still:  
work  
travel  
celebrate  
eat  
worry  
laugh  
make bad food decisions  
make good ones  
Diabetes comes along for the ride.  
It doesn't take the wheel.

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## **Forty years later**

I've taken tens of thousands of injections.  
Had highs.  
Had lows.  
Ignored advice.

Learned patterns.  
Adjusted routines.  
And I'm still here.  
Organs working.  
Eyes functioning.  
Mind intact.  
Still occasionally arguing with dessert.  
That's what long-term management looks like.  
Not perfect.  
Just steady.

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### **What actually sustains you**

Not fear.  
Fear burns out.  
What sustains you:  
routine  
knowledge  
consistency  
adaptation  
and a sense of humor when things don't behave  
Because sometimes they won't.  
And that's not failure.  
That's biology.

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### **The real win**

You don't "beat" diabetes.  
You outlast it.  
You learn it.  
You manage it.  
You live alongside it.  
And over time...  
it becomes background maintenance, not front-page drama.

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### **If you're newly diagnosed**

Take a breath.  
You didn't ruin your life.  
You didn't break yourself.  
You're not alone.

You're just at the beginning of learning something millions of people manage every day.  
And you will too.  
Step by step.  
Routine by routine.  
Day by day.

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I'm sharing this because someone should have told me these things back in 1985.  
It would have saved a lot of unnecessary worry.

**Support this work (completely voluntary)**

If this guide helped you feel calmer, more informed, or less alone...  
and you'd like to help newly diagnosed people find honest, real-world guidance like this...  
you can make a small voluntary contribution to support the mission and allow more resources  
like this to be created.

No pressure. No expectations.

If supporting isn't possible right now, just use the information and take care of yourself. That's  
what matters most.

[Buy Hans a Coffee](#) 

If this guide helped you even a little — share it with someone who might need it.  
Diabetes can feel lonely at the beginning.  
It doesn't have to be.

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**Final thought**

You don't need to be perfect.  
You just need to stay in the game.  
And if you do that long enough...  
you may look back one day and realize:  
you didn't just manage diabetes.  
You lived a full life with it.  
— Hans