Holidays and Special Occasions

Birthdays, holidays, and other celebrations should be happy times but they can often cause extra stress for the child with diabetes. He will want to eat the same food as everyone else and it can be embarrassing to be left out.

Birthday Parties

• Send snack options that everyone can eat such as fruit/veggie tray, pretzels, or popcorn.

• Notify host parents of the child’s diabetes, and provide a list of emergency numbers.

• Parents can volunteer to bring a healthy option to the party and help out.

Holidays

• Modify recipes to be healthier and diabetes-friendly.

• Take the focus off candy and other holiday-themed treats.

  • Fill goodie bags with yo-yos, temporary tattoos, and other small toys.

  • Make new traditions by paying more attention to holiday activities rather than food. Try apple-picking on Halloween, decorating the Christmas tree, or playing Frisbee on the 4th of July.

Dining Out

• Take time to look at menus online to give the child a chance to choose what he wants before arriving at the restaurant.

• Box up half of the entrée at the beginning of the meal and take home for later.

• Make finding healthy options on the menu into a game—have the child look for key words like grilled, baked, broiled, and steamed.

Remember that when straying from the normal meal plan, blood glucose levels may fluctuate and should be checked more often. With a little planning, though, children with diabetes can certainly join in the fun.