

PLAYING THRU

CHRIS DUDLEY FOUNDATION MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER



ROB HOWE: DOING BIG THINGS

Rob Howe is a type 1 diabetic living in Dallas Texas. Diagnosed on January 1st, 2005 at the age of 16, Rob was the recipient of excellent care from the incredible endocrine staff of Children's Medical Center of Dallas. They assured him that as long as he took care of his health, he could achieve all the goals he had for his life. After graduating as the Valedictorian of his High School class, Rob went on to receive a full collegiate scholarship to the **University of Colorado** - Colorado Springs to play basketball, and graduated with honors 4 years later with a Bachelor of Science in Business. Following graduation, Rob started his career in the marketing world at USA Boxing, working through the 2012 London Olympic Games. In the fall of 2013 Rob accepted an offer to play professional basketball for the **Washington Generals** against the World Famous Harlem Globetrotters on their 2012-13 World Tour and fulfill his lifelong dream of playing pro basketball.

Biography originally printed on www.diabeticsdoingthings.com

Rob lives life with T1D to the fullest, not only working hard to achieve his dreams but also reaching out to the diabetes community and helping others achieve theirs. Rob exemplifies the Chris Dudley Foundation's motto of "living active with diabetes"! CDF was lucky enough to catch up with Rob to chat about his life with T1D and his current projects - his podcast, **Diabetics Doing Things** and his **#OverTheCounterT1D** project, exploring the effectiveness of managing T1D without the resources provided by health insurance.



When were you diagnosed with type 1 diabetes?

Rob: I was diagnosed 1/1/2005. It's kind of nice to be diagnosed on a holiday, because it's easier to remember your diaversary. So every New Year's Day, I know it's been another year with T1D.

What were your first thoughts when diagnosed?

Rob: I was 16, and really just starting to play basketball on a high level. So my first reaction was "Will this affect my basketball career?" My doctors immediately assured me that every dream I had for my life was still in reach as long as I took care of my diabetes. It made it pretty easy for me to accept my treatment because all I wanted to do was play well.

Tell us about your time playing college and professional basketball? How did diabetes play a role in this time in your life?

Rob: First of all both experiences were some of the best of my life. Both difficult in their own ways, but pursuing the

dream to play in college and professionally shaped who I am as a person and I wouldn't trade them for the world. There were certainly difficult times with T1D, especially in college, because so much was riding on every game so stress and cortisol were big time factors in my blood sugar, and more often than not the physical demands of playing college ball affected my blood sugars. But I was up front with my coach and my training staff from my first day on campus during my recruiting trip, and we found a way to work through it. By the time I was playing professionally, I felt the need to keep it a secret from the teams I signed with, because there was such a slim margin for error at the next level for me. Fortunately I never had any issues and trainers can keep secrets :) I absolutely recommend being up front with your coaches and training staff no matter how high up the ranks you climb. It's much safer that way.

Tell us about Diabetics Doing Things. What is DDT? What inspired you to create this platform?

Rob: So I started Diabetics Doing Things in 2015 because I wanted to tell the often overlooked amazing stories of people living with Type-1 Diabetes. Some of those stories would be incredible feats like playing pro sports or traveling the world, but equally impressive would be the stories of living a successful normal life, having a family, volunteering, teaching, and having fun. When I was in college I exchanged a few emails with a kid who had been told he couldn't run Triathlons anymore after he was diagnosed with T1D. I explained that my doctors had told me

that as long as I took care of myself I could do anything, so to be careful but try to chase his dream. A few months went by and I got an email from him with no subject line, and when I opened it, there was a photo of him with a participation medal in a triathlon jersey. I still get chills when I think about it. So I figured if I could help at least one person, it would all be worth it. So I started the podcast and Instagram and went from there!

Tell us about your current Over the Counter project?

Why did you decide to do this diabetes

"experiment"? What have you learned so far?

Rob: So I've put away my insurance card for the month in an effort to create awareness about what it's like to live with T1D without insurance or prescriptions. There is a lot of coverage about the cost of insulin, but very little around what living over the counter is like. It's been quite the journey so far but I'm getting the hang of it. It's certainly harder, but if you have no other option you can absolutely live well on R and NPH. My favorite part has been getting involved with the T1D scientific community for the first time. They're super helpful and have been a great resource for me.

What advice do you have for young athletes with T1D?

Rob: My primary advice is BALL OUT! You are just as deserving of anyone else to play at your best and have fun doing it. There will always be doubters or people who are uneducated, but my mindset was to just turn them into believers. Just take care of yourself, test often and be confident in the decisions you make. If there's anything athletes like Jordan Morris, Adam Morrison, Gary Forbes, Chris Dudley and more have taught us is that you can be an amazing championship winning athlete with T1D.

Listen to Rob's Podcast here: www.diabeticsdoingthings.com/podcast

Follow the #OverTheCounterT1D Challenge here: <https://www.youtube.com/c/DiabeticsDoingThings>

