

Your teen, his drinking, and you

Your youngster is growing up and is now happily crossing the threshold of adolescence with its share of outings with friends and ... whether we want to admit it or not, its first consumption of alcohol.

Well! Type 1 diabetes does not really mix well with alcoholic beverages. Too much alcohol can cause severe hypoglycemia. Mixed with juice (cocktails), it can cause hyperglycemia. This is also the case for some trendy drinks.

What can you do to prevent a disaster while letting your teenager live his life?



Guiding rather than judging

Surrounded by his or her friends, your youngster will decide whether to consume his or her first alcoholic drinks, or not. Let's face it. You won't be there to talk him out of it. The best thing to do is to guide your teen so that whatever decision they make, they don't have to suffer for it.

Calculate carefully how much he or she drinks

Your teen should know that he or she should be as cautious with drinking as he or she is with carbs. A boy should not exceed one drink per hour while a girl should limit her consumption to one drink per two hours to give the liver time to metabolize the alcohol and not get intoxicated.

Remind your teen that glucagon is not efficient while treating a hypoglycemia induced by too much drinking

It is imperative to avoid competitions where too much alcohol is consumed. Alcohol taken in excessive quantities, in addition to the risks of intoxication, can cause severe hypoglycemia. It is better to limit its consumption and drink slowly to make it last.

Have someone of the group be aware of your teen's condition

When your teen hangs out with friends, there must be one of them who is aware of his condition and who knows what to do in case of an emergency.

Always have the diabetes management kit handy

When your teen goes out, he or she should always have the kit close by to make the right move if something goes wrong.

Bring some snacks to eat while drinking

Eating helps to better metabolize alcohol. It is a good idea to remember to eat your meal before going out and to bring snacks and sugar supplements to accompany the drink.

Check the blood sugar, before, during and after drinking alcohol.

Maybe it doesn't sound cool, but this is a good way to avoid problems.

Keep watching glycemia even 24 hours after drinking

When you drink alcohol at night, you may still experience a hypoglycemia in the morning if you are T1D, according to a study that was published in the magazine "Diabetes Care".

Moreover, the symptoms are tricky. It is hard to tell whether you are experiencing a hypo or simply if you have drunk too much (mood changes, dizziness, unsteady walk, blurred vision).

Your teen has overdone it a bit?

It's important that they feel confident enough to tell you if they've been overwhelmed so you can take their blood sugar before they go to bed and make sure they're okay.

A few tips to avoid complications:

- Consider reducing long-acting insulin or nightly flow by about 30%.
- Check ketones if blood sugar is extremely high or if youth is vomiting.

Thank you to Dr Geoffroy for his precious advice!

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