

Our Pump Journey

My daughter Honey was diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes at 15 months old in March 2007, that was over 2 yrs ago and she is now 3.

We used mixed insulins initially but soon found that in a baby so young the best way forward was basal bolus (MDI) to suit her little and often eating/drinking habits. Basal Bolus gave Honey much more freedom to eat and was better at first but again we soon found that Honey needed smaller amounts of insulin than even a junior pen could deliver. We then started getting an interest in insulin pumps and wanted to find out more about them.

A big reason for wanting a pump was because we had real problems during the night. Honey would rise every night at 3am but we could not solve this as 0.5 unit of Levemir would have a big effect on Honeys levels. An extra 0.5 would make her bg levels drop by 10mmols, not giving the extra she would then rise by 10mmols.

Honeys levels during the day were also unsettled. We could never give the insulin pre meal but had to wait until after and weigh leftovers so we could work out the carbs, this would cause a big rise. This all amounted to a high Hba1c of 9.6 before pumping. This in its self was a motivation to get a pump for her.

Honey was having up to 10 injections a day on basal bolus regime, Honey still enjoys eating little and often and I felt that this was far too much on such a small person in order to let her lead a fulfilled life.

So I decided to meet with other parents that had children with pumps, and although I knew it would be hard work especially to begin with I went ahead with starting Honey on a pump when we were offered one.

I can wholeheartly say that its been the best decision for Honey and for us as a family. The reason this has been so good is that we were given a tool to work with and we made it work. Honey can now have

those smaller amounts of insulin that her body needs, we can make 0.05 increments with her pump. Honey has got 19 different basal rates over a 24hr period suited to her needs.

The biggest change is the difference in Honey herself, her personality changed in the space of a week. Before pumping she would get tearful, lethargic and tended not to join in with my other children. As Honey was diagnosed so young we just thought this was her. Honey is now a happy, very active relaxed child who loves to play along. Several people commented on the change in her and this is because her sugars are not swinging high to low everyday. They are much more in range than ever before. Honey feels better in herself and it shows!

We change Honey's infusion set every 2 days and this is so much better than injecting 10 times a day. Our family have been able to become more involved with giving a bolus'. Also we can be more discreet when giving a bolus, rather than having to keep injecting her in public in her bottom and legs. When Honey eats I can give a bolus for half of the carbs up front and then the rest after if she eats all of her meal. If Honey decides she would like something else 20 mins after eating I can do this easily pressing buttons rather than her enduring yet another injection.

The pump allows you to give temporary increase/decrease to the basal rate. This has been a huge advantage with illness, just recently Honey had a temperature/cold and her sugars soared so I put on a 30% increase and she came back into range. I used this for 4 days then took it back down when she was well again. With sickness you can put on a decrease in the same way when the sugars are dropping fast. Exercise is another important factor and we can decrease the basal for activity out of her normal routine such as swimming and indoor play areas etc. This helps to cut down on any hypos post exercise. You can have a weekday and weekend basal rate for when you are at school and one for when you are either more active or less active at weekends.

Honey wears her pump in a pump belt around her waist, she has never tried to remove the pump or pull on her set. Honey hardly seems to notice it is there and although it is almost always attached

to her it does not slow her down or stop her from doing what all other 3 yr olds are doing. Angel Bear.com have a really good range of belts etc. It is part of her now and the best news of all is that her first hba1c since pumping has come down to 7.0%.

I am very pro pump especially for Honeys age group but it is very hard work to begin with especially. You have tremendous support from your pump trainer but you are sleep deprived to start with. This is because you really do have to test every hr/2hrs 24hrs a day to help set up your basal patterns. I was already putting in alot of work with tests and I always have night tested, I had prepared myself for the sleep deprivation. The pump is not a fix alone, you have to put in the work and learn all that you can in order to use the tool to its fullest. Carb counting really does have to be spot on and you need to be confident in your calculations. Invest in some good scales, the Nutri - Weigh ones are highly recommended by myself and other parents.

Anyone who is offered a pump has an amazing opportunity and I would do it again every time.

If anyone who reads this would like to meet us and to look at Honeys pump I am happy to do so.

Thanks for reading and Good Luck
Jenna