When you have diabetes, it is important to plan ahead for safe driving. High or low blood sugars affect driving skills. You don’t want to get hurt, or accidently hurt someone else, because you make a mistake while driving. It is your responsibility to make sure your blood sugars are controlled. This brochure can help teens with diabetes know what to do to be safe drivers.
For Teens and Young Adults

Possible dangers on the road.
Because of high or low blood sugars you can:
• feel sleepy or dizzy
• feel confused
• have blurred vision
• lose consciousness or have a seizure
• have a hard time concentrating

Any of these can be very dangerous if you are driving.

Plan ahead.
You are responsible for making sure that you and others on the road are safe. Here’s how:
• Test every time you get behind the wheel of the car.
• Carry your blood glucose meter and plenty of fast-acting snacks in the front seat.
• Watch out for high blood sugar levels (hyperglycemia). The symptoms may affect driving.
• If you are low, **DON’T DRIVE.** Treat and only drive when your blood sugar is back within normal limits.
• Wear your medic alert bracelet/necklace. If you are in an accident, you may not be able to speak for yourself.
• Check your blood sugar every 1-2 hours when you are driving a long distance.
• Don’t leave your insulin, meter or test strips in the car. Changes in temperature in the car can damage them.
• Use a cell phone to call for help if needed. Don’t talk on the phone when you are driving. Pull off the road or have a passenger make the call.
• Follow all basic state safety rules for new drivers. (For example, wear your seat belt, limit the number of passengers and don’t drive later than you are allowed.)
For Parents

Help your teen stay safe.

• Talk to your teen. Review these guidelines and make sure your teen understands them.

• Don’t be afraid to take away the privilege of driving for a time if your teen doesn’t follow the rules for driving and managing diabetes.

• Teens who ignore driving rules and/or whose blood sugars are out of control should not drive. Your teen could be hurt, or could hurt someone else, if you do not set limits.

Enforce rules.

• Check that your teen tests every time she gets behind the wheel of the car.
  – Review the blood glucose meter
  – If your teen is not testing, take away driving privileges for a time.

• Make sure your teen is not driving with low blood sugars.
  – Review the blood sugars after a trip. This shows your teen how serious you are.

• Make sure your teen has a meter and fast-acting snacks in the front seat at all times.

• Make sure your teen always wears a medic alert.

• Make sure your teen is testing his blood sugar every hour or two when he is driving a long distance.

• Make sure your teen doesn’t leave his insulin, meter, or strips in the car. Temperature changes can damage them.

• Make sure your teen carries a cell phone to use if she needs help.
  – Remind her not to use the phone while driving.

• Make sure your teen follows all of the basic state safety rules. (For example, wears seat belt, drives during the times permitted, and limits number of passengers.)