

REAL Diabetes ControlSM eNews

A News Source for People Who Take Active Control of Their Diabetes.

A Coach's Perspective: Third in a series highlighting the benefits of fitness & nutrition coaching programs provided by Fitness4Diabetics.com to insulin-pumping cyclists with diabetes who are preparing for a JDRF Ride to Cure!

Throughout our lives, each of us has benefited in some way from a coach. For some of us, this coach was a teacher, or an instructor on the sports field. For others, a parent or a friend. No matter who, where, or when that coach entered our lives, their role was the same – to teach a skill, to provide a focus, to grant perspective, to help us reach our goals.

Our JDRF cyclists ([Jen Davino and Dan Lobdell](#)) embraced an opportunity to work with the Fitness4Diabetics coaching staff while training and preparing for a Century Ride fundraiser. Similarly, our coaching staff embraced the opportunity to work with these inspiring athletes and to support a remarkable cause – [JDRF's Ride to Cure Diabetes](#).

Each client's coaching team consists of a nutritionist, an exercise physiologist, and a nursing professional – all of whom maintain unique qualifications in the field of diabetes management. After extensive review of initial intake assessments, and based on the information provided by the client and his or her healthcare team, a specific exercise/fitness and nutrition program is developed. Every two weeks, a new progressive plan is delivered via email. Over the course of the 2 week segment, our riders communicate with coaches via email and/or phone to ask questions, provide feedback, discuss progress, and problem solve.

The [Fitness4Diabetics](#) coaching concept allows people with diabetes to partner with a team of experts, who are working for you! As Fit4D coaches, your goals are our goals! Our gift to you is one of motivation, guidance, encouragement and support. We can't wait to see you succeed!

A century ride is 100 miles on the road, hour after hour in the saddle of a bike. Once they made the decision to commit body, mind, and bike to training for a Ride to Cure, our cyclists started their exercise training with a focus on building aerobic base mileage to prepare heart, lungs, and legs. Before clipping feet into pedals however, a substantial part of the success lies in the planning. Planning on a calendar, and committing to the when of exercise – each week, everyday. Workout plans are provided by their exercise coach. Miles are logged by our cyclists. Food intake, blood sugars, and pump basal rate adjustments are all recorded. Together, coaches and clients sift through this data and make adjustments and progressions, always with that ultimate Century Ride goal in mind.

Preparation is key to almost anything we do in life, especially when our goal is to accomplish it successfully, with health and wellness on our side. Our cyclists know this better than most... and strive for this in their exercise regimen, their nutrition intake, their hydration levels, and their day-to-day (and thanks to their insulin pumps) sometimes hour-to-hour diabetes self-management decisions. Sometimes it all goes exactly as planned. Sometimes it does not. On occasion, plans go completely awry. Even with the most perfectly laid plan, life often gets in the way. Success means adapting and adjusting. Both of our cyclists have experienced similar recent "bumps in the road".

Jen has seen scholastic endeavors, work, and family life challenge her schedule of base mileage. She experienced a few weeks of reduced training ride frequency and mileage as a result, but she is maintaining minimal requirements for aerobic capacity and is striving to get back on track. Her coaches are here to support her. Even times when it feels like the "road monsters" have leaped right up and grabbed on!

REAL Diabetes ControlSM eNews

A News Source for People Who Take Active Control of Their Diabetes.

Dan, as well, has experienced similar time commitment challenges. His change in work schedule and work-related travel forces adaptations to his workout plan. A planned long ride on the bike becomes a spinning workout in a hotel gym. Due to family commitments, Dan has switched his original planned Ride from Whitefish Montana in August to Asheville/Smoky Mountains North Carolina in early September. Coach and rider will use this to his advantage by taking advantage of a few additional weeks of training time.

Besides the above noted demands of real life, some of the other challenges facing our cyclists-in-training are hills. And metaphorically speaking, perhaps those are really one and the same. Both of these chosen Century Rides present challenging terrain, including elevation – HILLS! To train for hills, you have to train *on* hills – *up* hills and *down* hills. Strengthening heart, lungs, and legs. Recruiting muscles of the core – those all important abs and back. Preparing body, mind, and spirit to both face and overcome a hill. Basal insulin requirements for hill training workouts can be quite different than those required during flatwork. With a focus on breathing techniques, cadence training, and blood sugar patterning, our riders are each including hill work in their weekly plan.

Our athletes-in-training continue to receive integrated support from their fitness and nutrition coaches. Throughout it all, diabetes remains a constant companion. Athletes with diabetes truly have a unique insight into the physiology of exercise, and in particular glucose metabolism for fuel production. The tools that we have available to us today – “designer insulins”, insulin pumps, continuous glucose monitors are revolutionizing self-management and empowering us all. Our JDRF cyclists are embracing the precise control that is at their fingertips via their insulin pumps. With the support of their Fitness4Diabetics coaching team, they are each applying the learned knowledge of carbohydrate metabolism, hydration and nutrition, as well as the personal experience of blood glucose response and adaptations to training.

Approximately five weeks prior to their Ride date, our cyclists will enter a peak training phase. During this period, time in the saddle is optimized - the workouts become more intense, the mileage is maxed. Our Riders will then begin to taper their training 7-14 days prior to the event. Tapering involves a significant reduction in overall mileage and allows the body to recover and replenish. This timeframe is the final physical and mental preparation for the upcoming Century Ride. Keep up with our cycling pack and stay tuned!

Delaine M. Wright, MS, CDE, CPT
Certified Diabetes Educator ~ Exercise Coach, Director of Exercise Physiology
www.Fitness4Diabetics.com

