



Using and Insulin Pump

Mary Robertson:

How did you - how did you feel when you first started on the pump?

Jane Mitchell – Type 1 Patient:

Excited...um...

Apprehensive, I think - I wanted to do it but it was the thought of a tiny little machine controlling you, but I soon learned that you control it.

And it just took a wee while just to become a bit more familiar with it.

I think the best advice anyone has given me is to take your two days, three days off work, lock yourself away, try just to study the literature.

Look at the websites, Medtronic's website. Familiarize yourself so it's not such a scary thought. It's very inconspicuous, I must admit.

Mary Robertson:

So this is the insulin pump here?

Jane Mitchell – Type 1 Patient:

This is the insulin pump and we have the reservoir here with insulin. So that contains all the insulin.

Mary Robertson:

And I see there's a little tube here - where's that tube going?

Jane Mitchell – Type 1 Patient:

Yes, that goes just into your tummy and there's a tiny little...cannula. And you can just unhook that if you want, if you're going in and out the shower, or an intense sport for an hour, or...

But I must admit, I tend to wear it either in my pocket, or you can wear it elsewhere around your body, and people don't know that you have one unless you want to tell them that you do.

Which I think it's been a really good thing because you don't feel that you're any different to anybody else, which is great.

I change my site for the pump every three days, and the pump's very clever, it has a little warning if your reservoir's going too low and you need to change your pump.



So I do that every three days. There's always a manual that, you know, can give you safety tips online. You can have your tips.

Basically it's very easy, just make sure your battery is always charged. It has a battery life warning on the pump, so I've never - I never worry about the battery going, but you just always make sure they're on your person.

I have always had a very - been very lucky with a supportive specialist team but I think it's very important - no question is ever a silly question, and they recommended that I do the carbohydrate counting. I've always sort of carbohydrate counted, but not as specifically and this was a sort of...renewing my knowledge, adding to it and just revising some, you know? Because I'd been diabetic for so long.

And then they put me on the insulin pump, I had to visit - there's the site, the medical site, where you can see actual displays of how the pump works and procedures - you know, how you use your pump, how you change your pump.

Mary Robertson:

Is this all online?

Jane Mitchell – Type 1 Patient:

This was all online, which was fantastic. So that was very good, and you're not just put onto the pump.

You're given a starter with, I think it's saline, they call it? I think that was a week and – I think that was, yes.

Mary Robertson:

Did you feel that was long enough?

Jane Mitchell – Type 1 Patient:

I did. I did, but I don't think you actually start to really know the pump until you actually start to wear it.

And not be frightened of it, and it's - it's normal to be frightened, because it's something new, but you soon learn that you're in control of it and it's not in control of you, and that was the best thing.

And even changing it initially the first time - a bit frightening, but as long as you - peace and quiet - you watch your online, the demonstration, and you see how easy.

But there's always support staff, the specialist team that are there to talk you through things, which... So you never thought you're on your own.



Mary Robertson:

Can you perhaps tell me what you - what you have to do to look after your pump?

Jane Mitchell – Type 1 Patient:

Really, I have to be honest, I probably would say hardly anything at all. Which is good, because you're trying to learn about everything, and any easy help in life is fantastic, which I think is great.

Really it does tend to sort of just look after itself, which is fantastic.

We're all finding out about insulin pumps, but because they're becoming more easily funded, which is fantastic, there are more people wearing them now.

So I think it's very important, if you can – your specialist team will probably help you -contact someone, with permission, and speak about maybe certain worries that you might have or - or, you know, if you've got a slight reservation about wearing the pump.

