

How to be a successful Tour de Cure cyclist with diabetes

Presented by TeamWILD Athletics:

Set a Goal. Join Our Team. Change Your Life.



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Message from Mari Ruddy

Founder of the Red Rider Recognition Program and Director of TeamWILD

Congratulations! You signed up to ride in the Tour de Cure! You have diabetes, and you are taking charge of your health. You are a Red Rider and at the Tour de Cure, you are the hero of the day. That's why I created the Red Riders. I know how challenging it is to live a healthy, empowered life with diabetes and I wanted all of us who get on a bike to have a day where we are celebrated for our courage to show up in our lives with determination and joy. Being a Red Rider at the Tour de Cure is that amazing day.

Now it's time to get yourself to the start line in top shape, mentally and physically, so you have a peak Tour de Cure experience. I started TeamWILD to bring to regular people who live with diabetes the resources to become a successful athlete. That's you. You're riding in the Tour, you have a bike. In my mind, that qualifies you as an athlete.

And athletes need resources. You need a training plan and you need really great diabetes, nutrition and sports experts to help you get to the start line. Because all Red Riders are near and dear to my heart, and because I deeply appreciate the American Diabetes Association and all they do to make diabetes better, I want to share two of TeamWILD's experts with you. Right here. Right now. Both of these coaches are highly qualified to help you ride your bike for your health and diabetes success.

Let me introduce you to these incredible coaches -



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TeamWILD Coaches:



Cycling Coach, Nicole Freedman is one of TeamWILD's Cycling Coaches. Nicole is an Olympic cyclist. She's a US National Champion. She was a professional cyclist for 12 years. She has coached hundreds of cyclists to athletic success. She currently runs the Boston Bikes program. And she is my cycling coach and over the years she has educated herself about the needs of athletes with diabetes.



Diabetes and Nutrition Coach, Marcey Robinson, MS, RD, CDE, BC-ADM, has two mantras that make all the difference for athletes with diabetes. One is "I love carbs!" The other is, "Use food to fuel performance." Marcey's gift is taking her exercise science and nutrition background combined with her deep knowledge of diabetes during exercise and making it all make sense to the everyday person with diabetes. Marcey has empowered hundreds of athletes world-wide, including me. Marcey is my diabetes educator.

*For all you Red Riders, may Nicole and Marcey help you as much as they have helped me and hundreds of us who are athletes with diabetes. **GO RED RIDER!***

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**Message from
Nicole Freedman,**
Cycling Coach for TeamWILD

Hello Red Riders!

I'm excited for you. I have coached many athletes like you with diabetes for the Tour de Cure. I am always thrilled to see you cross the line knowing you achieved your goal for the day.

When I coach athletes, there are a few things I ask them to think about before, during and after their event.

PRE-EVENT:

Set a Goal: You signed up for the event, you fundraised money, paid your entry and you are going to wake up very, very early. You clearly want something different than just a ride at home. So, most important, define your goal. This will ensure the best experience. Your goal can be a certain time for the event, finishing, feeling strong, raising money. Whatever it is, define it so you have something you can shoot for and accomplish. It will make the entire experience that much more rewarding.

Train for Your Ride: I guarantee you will have a more rewarding experience if you train for the

event. This does not mean you have to go crazy – but with your goal in mind, figure out the appropriate training and go for it. The Tour de Cure Cycling Guide provides training direction, you can train with us at TeamWILD or go online and find a plan.

My suggestion is that you allow yourself 4 to 5 months to train. At the absolute bare minimum you need 4 to 6 weeks to prepare with having accomplished at least 3 rides that are two-thirds of the total distance you plan to ride at your event.

WEEK OF THE EVENT:

Check Your Bike: There is nothing more frustrating than not being able to finish because of an easily fixable mechanical. Take your bike to the shop and make sure everything is working properly. It's easy to and you will be glad.

Make A Plan: What are you going to bring, what are you going to eat and drink, when are you going to test your blood sugars, when will you arrive, what will you wear. A good plan takes away all the stress. You can just cruise right to the start line with confidence.

Sleep Lots and Stay Healthy: It will allow you to realize all your fitness.

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DAY OF THE EVENT:

Pacing: Think about pacing. Start conservatively. You should feel like you are not going hard enough the first third of the event. Assuming that goes well you can pick up the pace a bit in the middle, and for the last third go as hard as you like.

Hills: On the hills, avoid charging up the first part of the hills. Start slow and if you feel strong, you can accelerate over the top. It is always more fun to pass people on the hills than be passed.

Eat and Drink for Performance: Follow your eating and drinking plan. For performance, it is hard to eat or drink too much. Try to have 1 large

bottle of liquid per hour and 300 calories per hour.

AFTER THE EVENT:

Celebrate and treat yourself well! Have a beer, massage, stay out late, whatever you like!

Some people get a little bit down after accomplishing a goal they have focused on for a while. Recognize this if you feel this way.

Start thinking about what event you will do next! And sign up for it. You'll feel excited again!

Have an amazing Tour de Cure,

Coach Nicole



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Message from
Marcey Robinson,
MS, RD, CDE, BC-ADM, Diabetes and Nutrition Coach for TeamWILD

Hello Tour de Cure Red Rider Athletes!

I'm so proud of all of you for taking on the challenge of riding with diabetes in the Tour de Cure. I have helped hundreds of you and I know how challenging diabetes and exercise can be. You can do this.

There are a few important things I want you to keep in mind as you train for your athletic event, your Tour de Cure.

PART 1: SPORTS NUTRITION

First, let's talk sports nutrition. Athletes use food as fuel. And remember, when you signed up for the Tour, you became an athlete. All bodies, whether diabetes or not, perform best when food is geared to properly fueling the body for energy and health.

During exercise, your bodies main source of fuel is carbohydrate and you need to pay attention to

quality AND quantity. High quality carbohydrate fuel includes whole grains, veggies, fruits, beans and low-fat dairy. Now quantity, during your training season, you need to include these foods daily to assure adequate energy for exercise.

How much do you need?

The ADA recommends 45-60 grams of carbs per meal for women and 60-75 grams of carb per meal for men - this is just a starting point, If you are trying to lose weight, it may be less (maybe 30 g carb/meal) or if you are performing regular endurance exercise, it can be a whole lot more. The thing to remember is that carbs fuel exercise and without them, you may suffer from fatigue and poor performance.

Your body uses carbohydrates as fuel for performance

Now with diabetes, carbohydrates can significantly impact blood sugar and some of you may even have put limits on your carb intake. However, I encourage you to make peace with carbs and as an athlete, learn to love carbs – they fuel exercise. So it goes the more your exercise, the more carbs your body needs. It may take some balance with your insulin or diabetes medication so please make sure you are sharing your goals with your health care

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team so they can help you adjust them if necessary. Remember, food is fuel and carbohydrate is what your body needs to fuel exercise.

Where does your body store carbohydrates?

Now speaking of carbs fueling exercise, you should know that your body stores carbohydrate in your liver and muscle tissue. If topped off, you can exercise using those stores for a maximum of 60-90 minutes before it's depleted. That means that if you plan on exercising for longer, you would benefit from eating carbs during your exercise.

Maintaining Energy and How Many Carbs per hour of Exercise?

Yes, even with diabetes, you need carbs to maintain energy for those working muscles. Even if your blood sugar is within range, you will fatigue and slow down if you don't fuel properly. The amount of carbohydrates needed ranges between 30 to 60 grams per hour of exercise. You will need to practice during your training to figure out the exact amount for your body. If you take the time to figure out the needs of your body during the training season, your Tour will be that much more successful.

What about Special Foods?

There are lots of special foods out there for athletes and for diabetes. You don't have to use those products. Or you can, if you find that they work for you. You can find things that make sense and are just normal foods. For instance at the tour aid stations, they always have bananas, these may be great fuel for you but you might find them hard to carry in your jersey pocket during training. One of my favorite ride foods are fig newmans. It's up to you and your taste buds to figure this out.

Strategy to cover those carbs, Our passion at TeamWILD

Now again, you will also need to manage your blood sugars while fueling your exercise. If you have Type 2 diabetes, you will need to experiment with your carb intake and work to match it to your exercise effort in order to maintain blood sugar control. If you take insulin, you will need to figure out your insulin strategy to cover the carbs. Talk with your health care team but you may be surprised to find out that they lack the experience in controlling blood sugars during exercise. This really can be done and there are a number of different strategies, in fact at TeamWILD, it is our passion to help athletes figure out their individual strategy.

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PART 2: DIABETES & EXERCISE

I have a few things that I want you to consider when it comes to diabetes and exercise:

1. The goal is blood sugar control and performance. Ideally you will be fueling your exercise and maintaining blood sugars within a range of 80-180 mg/dl, but it's really important for you to evaluate where your own target is and where you feel safe and strong.
2. Know how your medications work and how they will impact your exercise performance. If you are on insulin, know your insulin action and before each and every exercise session, ask your self – how much insulin do I have on board and how will that impact my blood sugars during my exercise.
3. Pay attention to your insulin, for both type 1 and type 2. Aerobic exercise, like cycling, will lower blood sugar because the working muscle increases the demand for fuel or sugar. However, for those of you who take insulin, it is important to remember that your body still requires some insulin during exercise to properly utilize carbohydrate/sugar as fuel. Your insulin needs will be reduced, however, please be careful. Decreasing insulin too much can

lead to uncontrolled high blood sugars and even ketoacidosis

4. Be Responsible: Whenever you go out for a ride, you must have a blood glucose meter and glucose tabs with you. Especially if you are on medication that could result in a low blood sugar. I recommend that athletes test at least every hour, more often if needed. If you are wearing a continuous glucose monitor and it's calibrated accurately that particular day, you might be able to test somewhat less frequently. The reason you want to test so often is to track your trends.
5. Track your trends and write down what you do. I know record keeping is no fun but by writing down your insulin/medication, what you eat and at what time, and what your blood sugars were doing, how long you rode, what were the conditions and how did you feel that day, you will be able to identify patterns and know what works and what didn't. Remember, you are your own best source of information. Review this data with your diabetes team and make adjustments as you go so that when you arrive at the Tour de Cure, you have a really good Ride Day Plan. At TeamWILD we insist that all our athletes write down their Ride Plan and review it frequently!

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PART 3: HYDRATION

Hopefully you are now thinking like an athlete - understanding the importance of carbs to fuel exercise not blood sugar and feeling pretty confident on exercising with diabetes.

But there is just one more very important tip I need to tell you. In fact, it is likely the **BIGGEST** predictor of exercise performance. Can you guess what it could be?????

HYDRATION

Hydration or body water plays many critical roles in all aspects of diabetes and exercise.

- *Transports nutrients (sugar) to working muscles,*
- *Removes waste products (lactate),*
- *Aids in digestion (many times stomach upset during exercise is a result of dehydration rather than a specific food choice),*
- *Regulates body temp*
- *Helps in preventing high blood sugars.*

I recommend cyclists carry two standard 20-24 oz bottles on their bikes and aim for about 1 bottle per hour.

During endurance exercise lasting more than 90 minutes and especially with warmer temperatures, a sports drink that has electrolytes and carbohydrates is preferred.

With diabetes, it may be best to have one water bottle with a sports drink and one with plain water in order to better fine tune carb vs. water intake or also help with bringing down a high blood sugar. Again, you need to evaluate which products work for you but when looking for a sports drink, make sure it is one to be used DURING exercise.

Have a fantastic ride and know we are here to help you!

Go RED RIDER!!



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Okay, that should have you well prepared to have an amazing Tour de Cure.

GO RED RIDER!!

If you like learning from Coach Nicole and Coach Marcey and would like more of them and of the other amazing experts at TeamWILD, be sure to sign up for our free newsletter and learn about all of our camps and training programs for everyday athletes with diabetes, check out the TeamWILD website.

teamwildathletics.com

