



100 Reasons Why

we are grateful for the
discovery of insulin



SANOFI

CHAPTER 8

Messages to Those Who Discovered Insulin



Visit <https://www.sanofi.us/en/about-us/our-stories/making-a-difference/american-diabetes-month> to read additional stories from others living with, caring for or committed to people with diabetes.



Visit <https://www.teamingupfordiabetes.com/> for diabetes facts, videos and resources to help you build a diabetes management game plan.

Alex Munoz

Care Partner to wife Sysy and their daughter with type 1 diabetes



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If I could go back in time and meet the people who discovered insulin, first, I would give them a huge hug and thanks. I would have so many questions: What was the motivation behind the research? Like me, did someone you loved or were close to have diabetes? I would tell them that because of their discovery my wife and child are alive! I would share that because of their discovery, they are just two of the countless lives that have been saved.

Si pudiera regresar el tiempo y conocer a las personas que descubrieron la insulina, primero les daría un gran abrazo y las gracias. Tendría tantas preguntas: ¿Cuál fue la motivación detrás de la investigación? Como yo, ¿alguien que usted amaba o alguien cercano a usted tuvo diabetes? Les diría que por su descubrimiento mi esposa e hijo ¡están vivos! Compartiría que por su descubrimiento, ellos son solamente dos de las innumerables vidas que han salvado.

Jason Sloane

Diagnosed with diabetes in 1986



I have always been interested in the history of medicine and, for selfish reasons, interested even more deeply in the history of diabetes. Throughout my college, graduate school and medical school career I would pick up bits and pieces of history, but without a formal class and not much time to spare, my research really started in Residency and Fellowship. One of the most poignant books I have ever read as someone living with diabetes was "The Discovery of Insulin" by Michael Bliss. It detailed the difficult early career of one Frederick Banting who at his origin was considered an unsuccessful physician struggling to make ends meet. Because he was not considered

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a renowned surgeon, his medical business was slow. This led to the need to make extra money which led to giving lectures to medical students at the University of Western Ontario. One of the lectures was about the pancreas, and his research on the topic led him down a rabbit hole of prior studies and started the most important scientific journey in diabetes history.

I had the chance to visit London, Ontario where Banting had his first medical practice and is said to have devised the initial hypothesis on how to isolate insulin. It was a humble house that I may have passed right by had I not done my own research about the incredible discovery that burgeoned from there. Outside the front door is the flame of hope, which represents all the hope insulin has brought to millions of people around the world and the hope that a cure for diabetes will one day come and the flame can finally be extinguished. Standing in the winter snow near the monument, I was awe-struck. I was outside the birthplace of insulin; outside the building where one man with an indomitable spirit defied odds and would not give up until insulin was available to the world. The experience brought me to tears. Seeing the dozens and dozens of thank you notes written by people with type 1 diabetes from around the world was amazing. If I had the opportunity to say something to the incomparable Frederick Banting, I would say thank you. Thank you for believing. Thank you for never giving up. Thank you for letting me live and letting me help other people with diabetes, now as an endocrinologist.



Terry O'Rourke

Diagnosed with diabetes in 1984

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The insulin you discovered profoundly impacted my life. I was diagnosed with diabetes at 30, just 63 years after your amazing discovery. Your discovery has given me life itself! Taking insulin allowed me to complete a trade-school degree that enabled me to work an entire career and also finance a comfortable retirement. One year after starting to take insulin, my child was born. Without your discovery, my daughter's life would not have been. I now look forward to attending her wedding this year, 37 years after starting to take insulin. Your discovery meant that I lived to complete a bachelor's degree, accomplished 16 years after I started taking insulin. In college, I learned to write. This enabled me to participate in the diabetes online community for the last ten years and help others improve their lives while taking insulin. Starting in my 16th year of taking insulin, I lived for 15 years on a 33-foot sailboat on San Francisco Bay. This adventurous lifestyle would never have happened without your insulin discovery. I took much pleasure and enjoyed many hours with sails full on one of the world's natural wonders. I can't begin to tell you how grateful I am for both your amazing breakthrough discovery and your willingness to share it with humanity. Your discovery and altruism made the last 37 years of my life possible and filled it with more meaning. Thank you!

I would like to say, "THANK YOU!" At the time you discovered insulin, the diagnosis of diabetes was a declaration of impending death. To all who changed that story a mere 100 years ago, the world owes much gratitude. I am forever grateful not only to the early scientists, but all those who continue to work to make life-saving products today... and all who will research and produce the agents of tomorrow.

Kent Porter

Diagnosed with diabetes in 2005



Jim Murphy

Diagnosed with diabetes in 1989



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As an engineer, I always look at things and I wonder how they work. I love the fact that around 500BC, some person noticed that ants were hanging around the places where there was urine. And noticed how they were attracted to the urine, because of the high sugar content. Then, the fact that many centuries later, Thomas Willis, who actually tasted urine, described it as sweet like honey. All these engineers and scientists doing all this testing finally led to Banting and Best doing experiments to isolate the protein, now called insulin, and make tremendous progress on a disease that has impacted the world for thousands of years.

All these people took the time from their lives and dedicated it to the advancement of human life. They were out looking for something that would help save people. That is what life is about! I always think of what Thomas Edison said about his experiments: "I have not failed. I have just found 10,000 ways that won't work." I would love to tell them all thanks for never, never, never giving up.

Insulin, even just the word itself, invokes all kinds of emotions including but not limited to joy, fear, resentment, gratitude, sadness, excitement, and anxiety for those living with diabetes and for those who support them.

Joy, gratitude, and excitement: a grandson who smiles at his grandmother—who had struggled with type 2 diabetes for a number of years—in attendance at his wedding now that her diabetes is under control.

Fear and anxiety: a mother who has learned that her child has been diagnosed with type 1 diabetes and the unknown rattles her to her core. But through your discovery, there is hope.

Every feeling is valid, and because of you, there have been many positive patient journeys so far and there are many stories yet to be written.

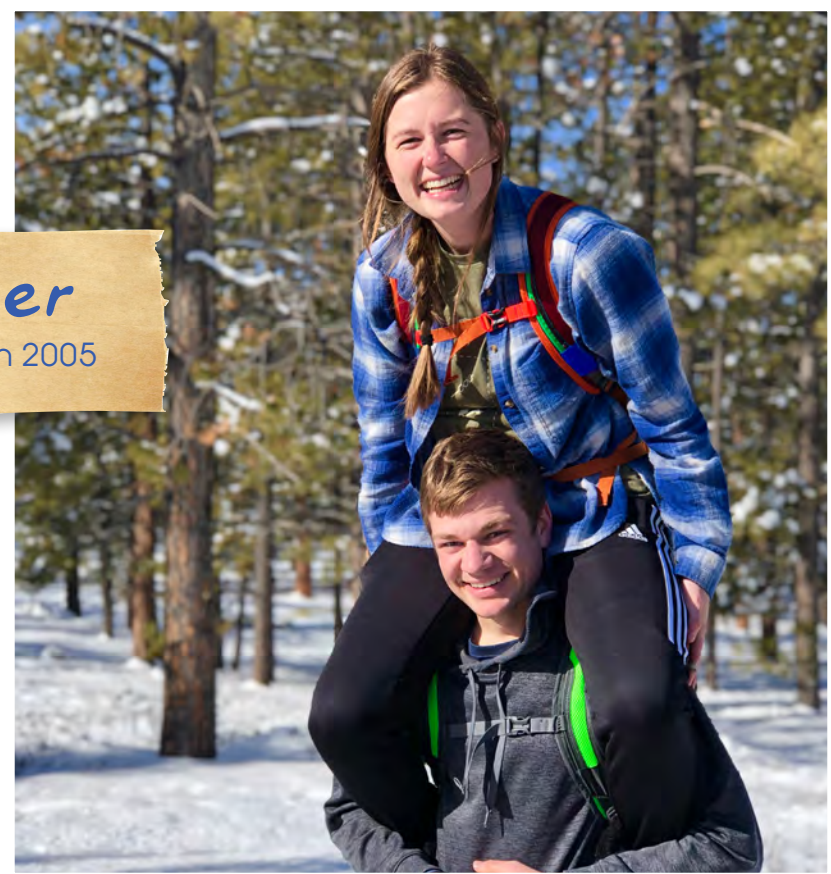
Scott Buda

Director, Thought Leader Liaisons
- Diabetes, Sanofi US



Alyssa Nimmer

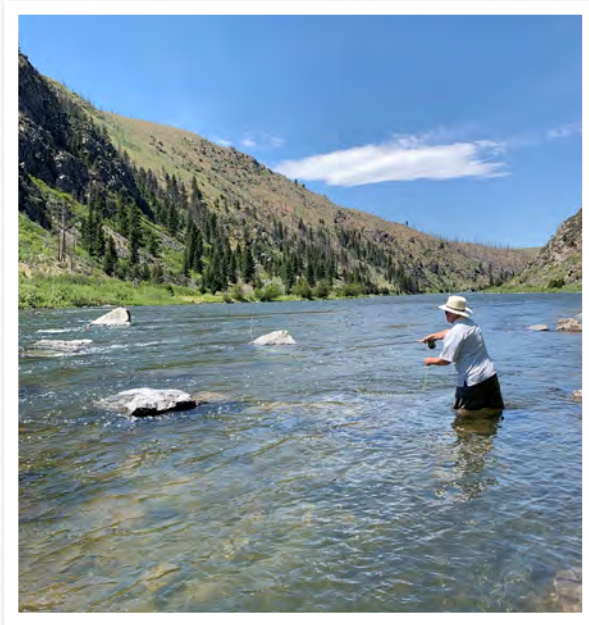
Diagnosed with diabetes in 2005



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Thank you! Since having insulin in my life, I've noticed I've only become more and more grateful for it. When I was first diagnosed, at age 6, I saw it simply as a medicine I needed in order to stay healthy. Later, as I went through high school and college, I saw insulin more as something that gave me the opportunity to be independent and live the active life I wanted to. I was able to play many sports, live on my own, travel, get a college degree, get a job and get married. Now, however, I am at a new phase in life where I am even more grateful for insulin. It is not only giving me the life I want, but it is also helping me create a life for my daughter. Without insulin, I would not get to experience a healthy pregnancy nor experience the joy of raising my child. Insulin has given me life, family, and a future.

I want to say thank you! Before your discovery, poor quality of life and imminent death was the outcome for type 1 diabetes. My dad was diagnosed with type 1 in 1940, at the age of 17, and was on pork-derived insulins. Without insulin, it is doubtful I would have ever been born, which of course means my sons would not have been born. I was diagnosed in 1990, at the age of 28, and recombinant DNA insulins were available. When my sons were born, I was 32 and 36, respectively. None of this would have been possible without the discovery of insulin. Recently, our 12-year-old dog was diagnosed with diabetes and is now insulin dependent. Without insulin, we would have even lost our beloved pup. To say that your discovery has made a difference in my life and the lives of my family is an understatement. You literally saved my life.



Bob Fox

Diagnosed with diabetes in 1990



Seth Bernstein

Diagnosed with diabetes in 1986



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If I could go back in time, I would thank the team that discovered insulin. I would not be alive today if insulin had not been discovered and available when I was diagnosed with type I diabetes. I would tell Frederick Banting, Charles Best and John Macleod that over the next century, their discovery would save millions of lives, including mine. There is an old saying: "When you save one life, it is like you saved the world." The discoverers of insulin have saved millions of worlds. I thank you and my entire family thanks you!

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Insulin for me is the lifeline to a lifetime of health and prosperity. Dr. Banting, insulin gave me time... time to graduate from a university and have a great career, time to win a state championship, time to run 4 half marathons, time to forge great relationships, time to spend holidays with good friends and family, time to have a son - Luke, time to be a baseball coach. Insulin has provided me with the opportunity to love and pass along that love to others through many avenues, including my current work visiting patients in the hospital as a volunteer.

Brian Cripe

Diagnosed with diabetes in 1980





If I could go back in time I would personally thank the people who invented insulin. Thank you for saving so many lives. Thank you, thank you, thank you!

Javier Vasquez

Diagnosed with diabetes in 2012



Si pudiera regresar el tiempo le agradecería personalmente a la gente que inventó la insulina. Gracias por salvar tantas vidas. ¡Gracias, gracias, gracias!

Greg Pfaff

Diagnosed with diabetes in 2000



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I would want to show the people who discovered insulin that they gave me the greatest thing, which was the true gift of life. Not just for me but for my entire family. Their graciousness and dedication to those in need was truly a God-given gift. While I believe they understood what they discovered, and this is why they accepted no monetary greatness which would have been easily achieved and well worth what they discovered, I do not think that these great minds could have conceived what a humanitarian gift they gave the world. The joy they have created 100 years since insulin's discovery and the change in me personally - to have more compassion and to go through my life with the desire to help others - is immeasurable.



Thank you to everyone involved. Many of us would not be alive today if it wasn't for their discovery. I also have several family members and friends living with diabetes and I know they are all very grateful for this amazing discovery. This discovery has led to many more discoveries around diabetes and has helped so many people, generation after generation, to lead healthier lives.

Diane Valencia

Diagnosed with diabetes in 2014



Mary Martin

Diagnosed with diabetes in 1994



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Thank you! For me, insulin has kept me in better control. I feel like I can handle the responsibilities of living with diabetes with greater confidence knowing that I have insulin in my life. I am not sure where I would be with my diabetes care without it, and I know my A1C would not be as controlled. Insulin has been a blessing for me since day one! Thank you, thank you, thank you to all those responsible for the discovery of insulin!



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