

How to Start a T1D to 100 Support Group

Starting a support group for adults aging with Type 1 diabetes is one of the most powerful ways to build community, share wisdom, and feel less alone on the journey.

Gather a Core Team

- Start with 2–3 friendly people
 - Write a mission statement: “What’s our purpose, and who do we hope to reach?”
-

Decide Your Group Structure

- **Open** (anyone can join) or **Closed** (invite-only, limited size)?
 - **Focus:** just T1Ds? Older adults with T1D? Caregivers and families, too?
 - **Schedule:** Monthly? Accessible venue? Virtual (Zoom, Teams)
-

Connect and Grow

- Partner with endocrinologists, educators, clinics, and local organizations
 - Flyers: clinics, pharmacies, gyms, community centers. Share: on social media
-

Keep Meetings Welcoming

- Use simple agendas: introductions → topic/speaker → Q&A/discussion
 - Use icebreakers, name tags, snacks, and greeters to make newcomers welcome
-

Build a Safe, Supportive Space

- Ground rules: confidentiality, respect, equal speaking time, no medical advice
 - Adapt activities for both talkative and quiet members
-

Plan Great Meeting Content

- Popular topics: devices, travel tips, recipes, new research, burnout strategies, mental health, advocacy, emergency preparedness, and more
 - Invite guest speakers like doctors, tech reps, or researchers for fresh insights
-

Keep It Sustainable

- Rotate leadership roles to share the workload and build ownership
 - Celebrate your progress – both group achievements and personal milestones
-

 **Most of all, remember: You are creating a safe, supportive space where people can connect, share, and thrive.**