

STORIES OF HOPE

Mom Rides for Madison

Name: Ellen Brodie

Home: Wilton, N.Y.

Introduction to diabetes: At age 16, she became the first family member with type 1. "After the initial shock, I realized that having diabetes was not the end of the world. I began to learn about the disease and how to stay in good control."

Having children: "I am extremely grateful to my endocrinologist, who has been my doctor for more than 25 years. When I wanted to have kids, right after I got married, she encouraged me to go on an insulin pump. I was able to have two healthy girls."

Diabetes revisited: Brodie's older daughter, Madison, developed type 1 diabetes in 2011 at age 8. "She was thirsty and lost some weight, but we caught it pretty early. I took her in to see her pediatrician – the same pediatrician who diagnosed me. I can't imagine how parents with no knowledge of diabetes deal with this. There's so much to learn – carb counting, testing, adjusting insulin doses."

"Diabetes is a family disease. It takes teamwork. Madison tests herself. Her sister, Skyler, and I give shots."

"Diabetes has created a bond for us. Now that Madison and I have this in common, we've gotten closer."

Hypoglycemia: Because Brodie tries to maintain tight control of her diabetes, her blood glucose occasionally drops below normal. Over time, she lost the ability to recognize when her blood glucose goes low and her brain shuts down.

"When I was pregnant with Skyler, I left work to go to lunch but never made it out of the parking lot. I passed out until 5:30. Nobody noticed I was missing. I woke up in a panic because I realized how much time had passed and I had to pick up my daughter, but I drove right into a tree. A guy in the parking lot got me a soda and called an ambulance."

"There have been about 10 times when I could not help myself or was unconscious. When my kids were 5 and 6, I taught them to call 911 if I'm not acting right. Now they recognize when I have low blood sugar and bring me juice or get help."

"I got a continuous glucose monitor about four years ago. If my blood sugar goes below 80, the monitor starts beeping and vibrating so I'm aware that it's dropping. That has really changed things for me. No calls to 911 since I got it."

Tour de Cure: Brodie, a banker, started and is captain of her employer's team in the local Tour de Cure, the American Diabetes Association's fundraising cycling event. Because she has diabetes, she wears a special Red Rider jersey.

"I'm doing this for Madison. I have been recruiting all my friends and coworkers to ride or donate to the cause. I want to do all I can do to help with finding a cure. The team raised about \$2,500 last year, and we're hoping for a lot more this year."

"I never rode before Tour, besides around the block. Last year, I rode 25 miles. This year, I'm trying for 50 miles. Next year, all three of us will be riding 10 miles." ▲

Find the location and date of more than 80 Tour de Cure events in 43 states at diabetes.org/tour.

Ellen Brodie, a Tour de Cure Red Rider, with daughters Skyler, 7, left, and Madison, 9

