

## DEFINING FEATURES OF DIABETES RESILIENCE IN YOUNG ADULTS WITH TYPE 1 DIABETES

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**Background:** Young adulthood presents unique challenges for type 1 diabetes (T1D) management in the context of normative developmental demands. Barriers to achieving optimal diabetes outcomes have been well characterized but less is known about how young adults overcome these challenges. The goal of this study was to describe protective factors among young adults with T1D. Identifying protective factors may help guide strengths-based interventions to promote resilience during the vulnerable young adult period.

**Materials/Methods:** Sixty-two young adults with T1D (M age= 19.57±1.3 years, 47% Female, 50% Caucasian, M A1C=8.2±1.4%) participated in qualitative semi-structured interviews about their perspectives on diabetes management challenges, how they overcome those challenges, and diabetes resilience. Interviews were transcribed verbatim and coded using content analysis to derive central themes.

**Results:** Young adults described three themes (1) Perceiving tangible support, especially from their parents. (2) Maintaining a positive outlook, such as believing one can live a “normal” life with T1D, and balancing diabetes demands with personal goals and priorities. (3) Implementing proactive behavioral strategies such as choosing to use diabetes management technologies (e.g., continuous glucose monitors, insulin pumps) and using general technological tools (e.g., phone alarms) for organization and to reduce barriers to diabetes self-management.

**Conclusions:** Young adults with T1D described interpersonal, behavioral, and cognitive protective factors. Healthcare providers may contribute to multidisciplinary care of young adults with T1D by identifying and building on patients' protective factors across these three domains.