

# More awareness of Type 1 needed

**Eva Lee is using social media to share details about the TEST campaign and raise awareness of T1, writes Deborah Condon**

When Eva Lee's son Danny was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes in June 2021, she admits she "hadn't a clue" about the condition.

"I had heard of Type 2 and I knew there were different types, but I didn't know about Type 1," Eva from Kells in Meath recalls.

Danny had just turned four at the time of his diagnosis. In the lead-up, he had been extremely hungry and thirsty.

"He would drink a lot of juice and my husband suggested that was the problem so we decided not to buy it anymore. However, after that, Danny, who would normally turn his nose up at water, began drinking cups of it during the day and he then started getting up at night and drinking from the taps. That set alarms bells ringing for me," she explains.

There were other symptoms too, such as going to the toilet a lot and irritability. Danny was brought to the GP, where a finger prick test revealed very high blood glucose levels.

"The GP was saying 'I'm sorry but don't worry, the hospital has a great diabetes team'. This was 5pm in the evening and she said she was going to do a letter



*Above, Danny on his first day using Dexcom*

for me for Drogheda. She said 'hopefully you'll get in quickly' and I said 'oh right, we'll be waiting a few weeks for an appointment' and she said 'no, you are going in now'. I was shocked," Eva says.

Danny ended up staying in hospital for eight nights, an experience Eva found very difficult.

"We weren't sleeping and they bombard you with information and then in the middle of it all, you're trying to give the child injections. It was really hard," she recalls.

However, since the shock of that hospital stay, she explains that they "haven't run into any major difficulties".

"Danny was originally distraught about the needles but the staff in the hospital explained it to him really well and

although it still took a bit of coaxing, he was much better about getting injected, although he really didn't like the night-time one," she says.

A few months later, Danny started on a pump and a continuous glucose monitor (CGM), which "gives him a lot more freedom". Although there is also a lot to learn with the use of these devices, Eva points out. Danny was in pre-school at the time of his diagnosis and Eva emphasises how brilliant the staff were with him. Nurses from Drogheda had trained them about Type 1 diabetes.

At the time of going to print, Danny was due to make the big transition to primary school, which will undoubtedly bring new challenges. However, for the most part, he has got on well dealing with this big change in his life.

"He has a few little wobbles every now and again. For example, we live in a housing estate and it can be tricky when other kids are eating treats. He can have some things, but he can't be eating five or six treats like some other kids might. I keep trying to explain to him, it's not because you have diabetes that you can't have all these treats, it's because it's unhealthy to eat that many treats," she explains.

In recent months, Eva has been sharing details about Diabetes Ireland's Type 1 awareness campaign, TEST, on her social media because she wants to raise more awareness about the condition.

"I can't believe how little is known about Type 1. Even if you go into a GP surgery or a hospital, there are no posters up or information. There needs to be more awareness," she adds.