



# spotlight on health

## Gold Medalist Gary Hall Jr. Discusses His Approach To Diabetes Care

(NAPSA)—Managing diabetes can be a challenge. So, how does an Olympic gold-medalist swimmer take on the challenge of managing diabetes and competing for the Olympics?

Recently, Olympic gold-medalist swimmer Gary Hall Jr. met with Paul Frickman, diabetes exercise coordinator at Florida Hospital Diabetes Center (FHDC) and a member of the BD Diabetes Dream Team, to discuss how diabetes has affected his swimming and how important it is to take a comprehensive approach to diabetes care.

**Q.** You have type 1 diabetes. What symptoms did you experience that ultimately led you to seek medical attention?

**A.** In 1999, I began feeling tired all of the time. I was always thirsty and started experiencing blurry vision among other ailments. After I collapsed at a party, I went to the doctor and was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes.

**Q.** What changes to your workout did you have to make once you were diagnosed?

**A.** I have to test my blood glucose level throughout my workout, which requires constant interruptions throughout my training sets. Testing is important for anyone with diabetes and is essential for optimum performance.

**Q.** In what way are you active in educating the public about diabetes?

**A.** Recently I began working on a diabetes education program called the BD Diabetes Makeover. BD came up with the program to inspire people with diabetes to improve their diabetes care and take control of their lives, instead of letting diabetes control their



**While it's not always convenient to test blood glucose levels if you have diabetes, it's always worth it to avoid complications, says Olympic swimmer Gary Hall, Jr.**

lives. The program addresses the five essential components of comprehensive diabetes management: medical treatment, education, nutrition, exercise and an overall organized and healthy lifestyle.

BD put together a “Dream Team” of diabetes experts, who are working with the program participants to better approach their care and help them live their lives. So far, the program has been tremendously successful. I’m just proud to be able to be a part of it.

For more information, visit [www.bd.com/diabetes\\_makeover](http://www.bd.com/diabetes_makeover).

**Q.** What products do you use to help manage your diabetes and why?

**A.** Because I am dependent on insulin to live, I use BD Pen Needles and Insulin Syringes. Both are comfortable and convenient, they make taking my insulin easier. When you do as much training as I do, you don’t need any unnecessary discomfort. “No pain, no

gain” does not apply to diabetes management. It does, however, hold true for Olympic training.

**Q.** What advice would you give to a person newly diagnosed with diabetes, particularly an athlete?

**A.** There are three main pieces of advice that I give to anyone diagnosed with diabetes. First of all, take care of your diabetes. While it’s not always convenient, it’s worth it to avoid any complications. Second, take advantage of the resources available to you. It is easier today to manage diabetes than ever before. Finally, if you manage your diabetes, you can do anything you put your mind to.

**Q.** What would you say to someone newly diagnosed who might have some concerns about going on insulin?

**A.** It is important for people to realize that injection technology has progressed to the point where insulin injections today are virtually pain-free. And I say that as someone who injects himself—on average—eight to 10 times a day.

**Q.** In your experience, have you found that a specific type of exercise is better in regulating your diabetes?

**A.** Aerobic exercise (e.g., swimming) will tend to drop my blood sugar levels, while anaerobic training (e.g., weight lifting) will not. Weight lifting sets will send my levels up and so will competitions. As for regulating my diabetes, consistency is the key with exercise to help maintain steady levels. It is more beneficial to train for 30 minutes every day than for 3½ hours once a week.

**Q.** Will we see you swimming in the 2008 Olympics?

**A.** Absolutely.

