

I've had to manage my diabetes with insulin since July 1984. During the first year or so of that time, I experienced three unexpected hypoglycemic episodes, all due to an unanticipated burst of physical activity. Since then, I've had hundreds (at least) of periods of unanticipated physical activity, which I consistently accompany or immediately follow by ingestion of food or glucose tablets.

By carefully monitoring my blood sugar (four to six times a day) and staying constantly aware of the signals my body is sending me, I've managed to avoid such incidents since then, despite the fact that my life is one that has involved extreme levels of stress and irregularity, and broad variations of levels of physical activity from one day or week to the next.

I visit my endocrinologist 3 times a year, and my ophthalmologist twice a year. In 18 years, I've undergone NO diabetic related neuropathy or retinopathy.

I've just been "downsized" out of my 40-year career, and would like to pursue my second love, trucking (half my consulting career has been associated with transportation and warehousing). Having already had to do this for the state of Texas when I first became diabetic, I know I can continue to be a safe, responsible driver.

I'm not asking that irresponsible or careless ITDM operators, or those who are ignorant of proper diabetes management, be even allowed to drive (commercially or otherwise). The fact that diabetes can be controlled successfully enough to satisfy the FAA, I feel, says it all; you can always pull a truck over to the roadside -- try that with a Piper Warrior in flight. I believe that a person who demonstrates on an ongoing, tightly monitored basis should have the right to pursue a career so long as he or she maintains a level of safety that equals or exceeds that which is required of any other operator. In other words, an equal chance.

Oh, and by the way, I would have no trouble paying for a reasonable processing fee to handle the monthly reports I'd submit. After all, non-ITDM drivers aren't required to submit these reports, even though they might fall asleep at the wheel (which I've witnessed), not understand proper operation of their equipment (which I've witnessed), and physically force automobile drivers out of their lanes and even off the roadway (which I've witnessed).