

# NY woman balances thyroid disease and diabetes

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Jet Landis

With two chronic conditions, she's learned 'not to sweat the small stuff.'

(HealthDay)—Jet Landis was only 4 years old when she was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes in 1992. Even though she was so young, she can still recall the extreme thirst she felt because of diabetes.

Landis was lucky, though, because her mother was a nurse and recognized the signs of [type 1 diabetes](#) before her condition became life-threatening. Still, the diagnosis was a difficult one because it meant that, while still a [preschooler](#), Landis had to begin taking daily [insulin injections](#) to replace the insulin her body was no longer making.

Multiple daily injections of insulin remain part of Landis's routine. Now in her early 20s, she manages her diabetes with the help of a continuous

glucose monitor to measure [blood glucose levels](#). The device, which is inserted under her skin, has to be changed about once a week. She also has to poke her fingers to do a standard blood sugar test to make sure the device is still providing accurate readings.

"I like to describe diabetes as a constant [balancing act](#)," said Landis, who lives in New York City. "Sugar and insulin are polar opposites, and if you add one, you must add the other. If too much insulin is taken, the blood sugar will drop and needs to be replenished by eating sugar."

She explained that "sugar represents any foods with carbohydrates." Pasta, potatoes, and even broccoli can cause [blood sugar levels](#) to rise, so their consumption needs to be balanced with just the right amount of insulin.

When Landis was 12, her [endocrinologist](#) told her that she also had [hypothyroidism](#), an underactive thyroid. The condition was discovered during a routine blood test.

Being diagnosed with hypothyroidism didn't seem like a big deal, Landis said, because she just had to take a pill to manage the disease.

"It was much easier for me when I found out that I had hypothyroidism," she said. "It seemed like a walk in the park to take a pill every day in comparison to the constant nagging that type 1 diabetes causes on my day."

To others in a similar position, Landis's advice is to "hang in there!"

"Take the best care of yourself that you possibly can because the tools that we have been provided allow people with type 1 and thyroid disease to live long and healthy lives with zero complications," she said.

And though it can be difficult to live with not one but two chronic conditions, Landis said she doesn't resent having them. She believes it made her more responsible at a younger age, she said, and she's thankful for being part of the community of people who live with chronic conditions.

"It's taught me not to sweat the small stuff," she said.

**More information:** A companion article looks at the frequency of [thyroid disease](#) among people with diabetes.

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