

## Communicating with your Member of Parliament

Communication by our JDRF Advocates is a key component and leads to the success of our Advocacy Program. It is through our advocates' personal communication with their Member of Parliament (MP) that they are able to share their personal story on how diabetes has touched their lives, increase awareness of diabetes and deliver our message – the need for a cure and the need to accelerate the pace of research through funding from our federal government.

JDRF Advocates communicate in many different ways with their MP. Personal meetings, letters, and phone calls are great ways to communicate JDRF's message. Having a face-to-face meeting with your MP allows you to develop a relationship with them by making a personal connection and brings a face to diabetes.

Never be afraid to meet or call your MP more than once a year. Touching base after the initial meeting allows you to build and maintain a relationship with them, and keeps the connection and dialogue around diabetes and JDRF top of mind. Letters and phone calls are equally impactful and are a great way to get JDRF's message across to our elected officials. Remember, MPs want to meet with their constituents and discuss issues that are important to them – in our case, it's diabetes.

### Most Effective Means of Communication:

- Personal, face-to-face meeting with your MP;
- Personal letters or e-mails; and
- Personal phone calls.

Utilizing the appropriate mode of communication can be the difference between educating your MP about an issue or discouraging him/her from listening. Always remember these tips when you are communicating with your MP:

- **Be concise**, honest, clear, polite, and specific when delivering your message and asking something of your MP;
- **Share** your personal story on how diabetes has touched you and your family;
- **Be patient** when interacting with your MP and their staff;
- **Be thankful** for any attention given to you and for their past support; and

MPs suggest and discuss new laws, and they question the government about important issues. That is why it is very important to connect with your MP and raise awareness about diabetes and JDRF's message - the need for a cure and the need to accelerate the pace of research through funding from our federal government. They can help us make a difference in the lives of individuals touched by diabetes.

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