

Gladys Dull's 90th birthday – At present it doesn't seem particularly newsworthy. But this isn't any 90th birthday. The remarkable aspect is that she is also celebrating 83rd year of receiving insulin. In 1924 she was 7 years old and was taken to Mayo clinic by her adoptive parents to be saved from dying of Diabetic Keto acidosis (DKA) at the time of diagnosis of her diabetes. It was only one year since commercial insulin was available. She and her parents were taught how to inject the crude pancreatic extract named Insulin.

Lets not forget that in 1924 Gladys didn't have television and Radio was also new, and still she learnt that diabetes is more than just taking insulin each day. She was taught that the secret for success was consistency in timing, content of food, insulin and regular exercise. Fortunately those fundamental recommendations still stay the same.

At age 9 she developed acute appendicitis and obviously no one was daring to do an emergency surgery on a 9 year old with Type 1 diabetes in 1926 and she was in coma and DKA and survived despite being in the pre-antibiotic era with just proper insulin therapy.

She was told not to have children but ignored that advice and now has her 60-year-old son, Norman. She is also a history book on the evolution of insulin. She remembers Protamine Zinc Insulin (PZI) in the 1930's and later Lente and NPH and now she is on insulin analogues (designer insulin) and she never developed terrible allergic reactions, which was common in the 1920's. She also monitored her diabetes using urine sugar testing till late 1980's after which she started using glucometers

She insists that her secret for longevity is her consistent diet, eating the same quantity of food at the same time each day, day after day, month after month, and year after year. She now lives in her own house, and of all awards she received, the one she is most proud of is the 75 yr medal from Eli Lilly insulin company. She is a living example for all of us by placing the topic of diabetes in the correct perspective. There are many other Gladys Dulls who will be celebrating 80, 85, and even 90 years of receiving insulin. They are inspirational to every one with diabetes today especially children newly diagnosed with diabetes and their parents