

Cruise with WAVES Blog



We're cruising with WAVES from Saturday, January 28th through Saturday, February 4th!

Couldn't make the trip but want to travel with us in spirit? Diabetes Services staffer Deborah Greenwood is blogging about our adventures daily, right here on our own blog page. Check back soon to join the fun! To return to the main

WAVES page, [click here](#).

Day One: Saturday January 28, 2006

Bon Voyage!

We all arrived safe and sound onboard the Constellation. The ship is immense with so much to offer.

The educators spent the day organizing and planning for the week. We introduced ourselves to the meeting personnel on the ship, we secured our internet hook up for our daily blog, we scouted for locations for informal group gatherings, and we tried to fit all of the week's supplies into our "compact" quarters. We greeted WAVES members as they arrived throughout the day.



Our first group dinner was small due to late arriving flights, but we all enjoyed getting to know one another. After dinner headed to see the "Rhythm of the Night" show.

The key question of the evening we presented to the WAVES group was "What do you hope to accomplish during the WAVES program?" Although we didn't ask for answers tonight, we will discuss our goals and plans tomorrow morning.

The evening ended with a Life-Boat drill! The tired group headed off to bed looking forward to a full day of programming tomorrow.

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Day Two: Sunday January 29, 2006



Our morning started early with a 7:00 am exercise class! The sun was just beginning to rise as we all stretched and warmed up before we enjoyed a brisk walk on the Sunrise deck (5 times around equals one mile!)

We had a full morning planned since we did not reach port until after lunch.

Our first class today covered the philosophy of the WAVES program. As diabetes educators we view our relationship with a person with diabetes as a partnership. In this partnership we both bring individual skills that are important in achieving an optimal diabetes self-care plan. The individual with diabetes brings knowledge of their life and an understanding of which of the many diabetes self-management opportunities will work for them. The skills of the diabetes educator are different. We bring an understanding of the various diabetes management options available and how they will affect a person's health. Together we create a TEAM.



We would like to recognize the important skills each member of the team brings and how important it is for each team member to respect the expertise of the other.

We reviewed the format for the week's programming including the WAVES log, a journaling opportunity for participants to reflect on their diabetes management goals and outcomes. We reviewed how to set measurable and obtainable goals.

Two hours after breakfast, there was an opportunity for those interested to check their post-prandial blood sugar. This blood sugar check provided

participants with diabetes insight into how their food choices at breakfast affected their blood sugar.

After a short break we began our Know Your Healthy Steps Program. This program provided participants with instructions on how to use a pedometer to increase activity. Each participant was provided with their own pedometer to use on the cruise and to take home.



After lunch participants enjoyed the Casa de Campo port or relaxing on the ship.

Our afternoon session, "Goal setting and developing health habits" provided the opportunity for participants to learn a step by step approach to help them reach their goals.

This informal session also provided the opportunity for general discussion and supportive conversation.



We enjoyed our dinner together as a group then participated in the evening entertainment offered on the ship.

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Day Three: Monday January 30, 2006

At Sea!



Today was a very productive day! The morning was very windy, so we had a light exercise class in our conference room using resistance bands followed by a healthy breakfast. Our first program of the day, "All About Cholesterol," answered participants' questions about steps to decrease blood cholesterol levels. After a short break to refill our water bottles and test blood sugar levels, Dr. George S. Motto, MD joined us for a discussion on recent research and a Q & A session. Dr. Motto is a diabetes specialist and the medical director of Diabetes Services.

The participants were excited to hear Dr. Motto and have the opportunity to ask many questions. Dr. Motto emphasized the lifestyle aspects of diabetes management including exercise and portion control. Participants were very interested in discussing the need for insulin and the genetics of diabetes.

After lunch we used the video "Walking Down Your Diabetes" for a thirty minute exercise class prior to the start of our afternoon program. Many of us are wearing pedometers this week. Yesterday our group walked a total of 45,089 steps!



Before our afternoon classes, the participants took some time to write in their WAVES journal and to reflect on the goals they have set and the steps they are taking to reach these goals.

Our afternoon session, "Hands on Practice," allowed participants to practice with insulin delivery systems. Participants were able to try insulin pens and practice injections. They also were able to push buttons on an insulin pump. Those in the class who are already taking insulin shared their experiences.

Participants were given an opportunity to ask questions and share concerns over the potential need for insulin in the future. Dr. Motto discussed that within 10 years, most people with type 2 diabetes will need insulin by injection.

We also discussed carbohydrate counting, label reading, and portion control. To help participants visualize carbohydrate choices, we used poker chips. One poker chip represents 15 grams of carbohydrate. Poker chips were traded in for food choices during example meals. Participants shared food choices from the previous dinner, carbohydrate choices were totaled, and the group provided suggestions to decrease carbohydrate choices (if needed) when faced with same meal



again.



The final class of the day, “Coping with Diabetes”, participants shared the most difficult part of living with diabetes, while offering support to each other. We had a very full and successful day! Tonight was “Formal” night, so everyone looked wonderful. After dinner we enjoyed some dancing.

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Day Four: Tuesday January 31, 2006



After our morning exercise and breakfast, we kept our mind on our feet as we discussed good foot care. Participants discussed healthy habits to prevent foot care problems.

Everyone in the WAVES group received free exercise socks courtesy of AAEE Shoes in Rolling Meadows. The group also received monofilaments and learned how to test their feet for sensory perception.



The second topic of the morning was coping with diabetes. The WAVES group shared what is the most difficult part of diabetes management for them. They also learned a problem solving technique and used the technique to help one of our participants make a plan to get into her exercise routine after she returns home.

The group then took a break to explore Barbados for the afternoon and made plans to meet again at 4:00 pm to informally discuss the glycemic index. Many participants were interested in this topic after hearing much about it in the news.



After our informal discussion we joined other guests on the ship to make masks for the evenings masquerade party. As we write this, we are looking forward to dinner.

After dinner we celebrated Carol’s 78th birthday, which is this Saturday!

We also celebrated Janet and George’s 37th wedding anniversary. We all sang and enjoyed a piece of cake. After dinner we attended The Cirque do Soleil show which was fascinating to watch.





We then headed for some Karaoke and the Masquerade party to dance the night away. With the added exercise of dancing, the diabetes educators logged over 18,000 steps each today!

Tomorrow we arrive in St. Georges, Grenada.

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Day Five: Wednesday February 1, 2006



This morning we awoke already docked at the port of Grenada. Before the WAVES program set sail, all of the participants were surveyed to discover which program topics were of most interest.

Learning about the health benefits of chocolate was high on everyone's list especially after recent

news reports detailing potential benefits of one of our favorite treats. The WAVES group was able to taste a new chocolate "CocoVia" that lowers cholesterol and the Hershey Dark Dark chocolate that is high in antioxidants. Everyone agreed that both would be an acceptable healthier alternative to satisfy their sweet tooth.



With the success of yesterday's class on coping, we decided to continue problem solving issues with the group. We asked participants to think about an area in their life they need to change. The group offered alternative solutions for the participant to implement.

After class we headed to the beautiful island of Grenada. The island is mountainous and lush

with tropical rain forests. Several members were off on individual shore excursions, so a small group of us took the water taxi to see one of the most beautiful beaches in the Caribbean, Grand Anse. We wore our pedometers and enjoyed a nice walk in the sun.



The group met in the afternoon for our daily informal session in the game room. We showed everyone the Northwest Community Hospital's My

Medical Chart that each participant received prior to the cruise. We discussed the great benefits for having a complete medical history including medications, family history, physician names and more information at your fingertips when visiting a new doctor or entering the hospital.

We also discussed hypertension and the relationship to diabetes. We reviewed ways to lower blood pressure with both lifestyle issues and medication.

This evening we plan to visit Michael's Club, a piano bar with a Name That Tune game, and will continue our exercise by dancing!

We can't believe how quickly this week is going. There are so many things to see and do both on and off the ship and everyone is having a great time!



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Day Six: Thursday February 2, 2006



After our daily exercise, our morning started off with a discussion of pattern management. Participants with diabetes were encouraged, if they felt comfortable, to share their blood sugar records. Using this information, blood sugar patterns were identified and the group offered solutions when the blood sugar management was not optimal.

A few of the suggested solutions included increased exercise, smaller carbohydrate portions, and the potential need for medication adjustment.

We reviewed the concept of rebound hyperglycemia after a low blood sugar and discussed how to identify this issue. We then headed to share an early lunch before our afternoon group excursion.



The scenic views on the rail tour of St. Kitts provide a unique atmosphere to discuss topics such support group options and diabetes programs available to participants upon their return. Diabetes Services offers support groups, exercise classes, and cooking classes. Additionally, each fall there is a Diabetes Fair that includes speakers and vendors that display their diabetes products.

was our second “Formal Night” so we decided we needed to take a group photo. We all assembled on the grand staircase for a wonderful group shot in our finest attire.

Once again we danced the night away for our exercise.



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Day Seven: Friday February 3, 2006



After exercise, the group headed off to explore St. Thomas.

We returned for final programming Friday afternoon. The program wrap-up included resources to help participants to continue their behavior change goals at home. Each participant was given a three month journal to help them continue to reflect on their diabetes management until we meet again in May. We encouraged everyone to document the successes they have as well as the pitfalls they may encounter and how to avoid them the next time.

The WAVES group was also asked to give feedback about the program and their experiences. All agreed that they would like to attend a WAVES program in the future, and would recommend it to their family and friends!

We enjoyed the final entertainment opportunities this evening. Tomorrow we begin the journey home, with a new outlook on diabetes. It was wonderful week and we hope you can join us next year.

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