


GOT SUGAR?



Dad's been in there a long time.

He has GOT to start remembering to take his pills.

Frankie's dad Charles has had diabetes for years. This is not Frankie's first trip to the doctor's office with Dad. What his dad doesn't know is that Frankie is afraid that his father is going to get really sick one of these days.

I told you it was nothin'. I'm fine.

Yeah, sure, Dad. I guess that's why you're limping.

Hey. Don't make a mountain out of a mole hill. It's just a blister that hurts like hell sometimes. That's all.

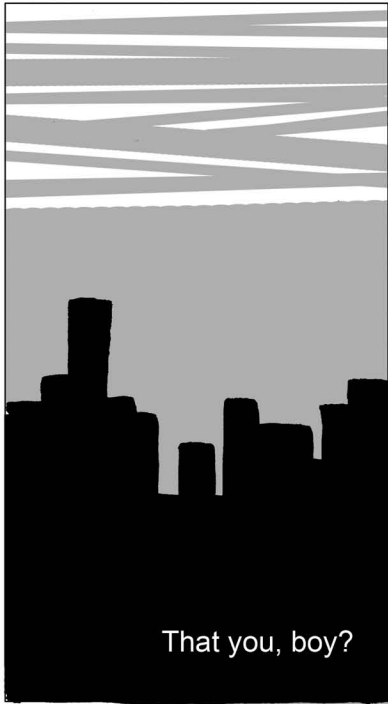
Yeah. Sure. Just like Grandpa had.

So how's school?

Fine, Dad. Same 'ole. Same 'ole.

But it's important, son. That's your future.

Here we go again. Dad's changing the topic so he can forget about his diabetes.



That you, boy?



Yeah, Dad.
Checkin' in for dinner.



Frankie was tired. He and his buddies meet in the park after school every day. Just to kick things around and take it easy. And, of course, try to be real cool when the girls come by.



Frankie! Dinner's ready.

Daddy! Come and get it.





Eat up, now. It'll keep you healthy.

Frankie watches his dad eat. Mom thinks food cures everything, even diabetes. But Frankie remembers a clinic visit when the doctor told Dad to lose weight or his feet would get worse. He fears the doctor may be right. But Dad doesn't seem to care.



Bobbie Gonzalez fainted in school last week. He's back now and they say he has diabetes.

Get on. He's a healthy lookin' kid if I ever saw one.



Yeah. I know. To tell you the truth, it kinda scared me. His mother has diabetes too and she is almost blind.

Things were real quiet at the table for a while. Too quiet for a girl Leticia's age.

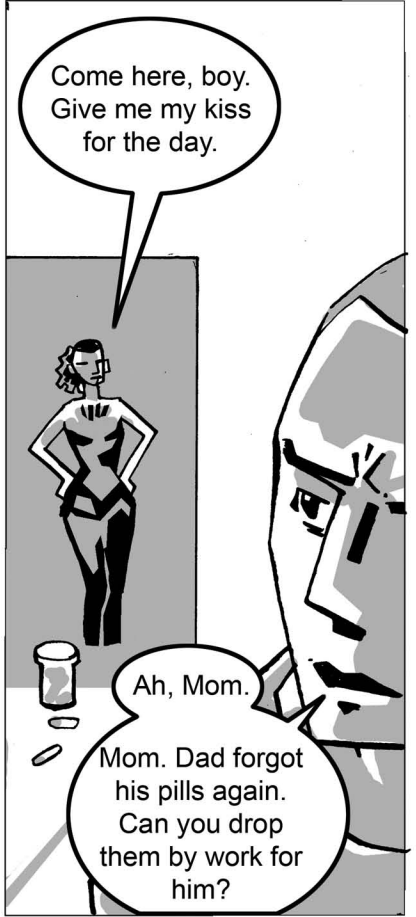
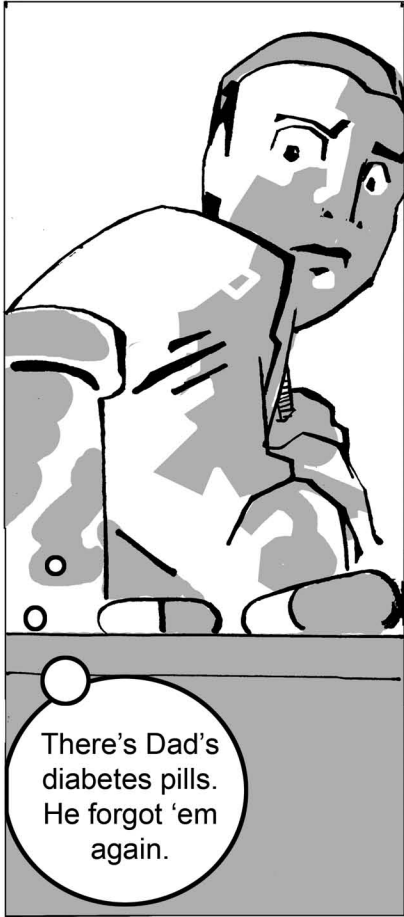
What's diabetes?

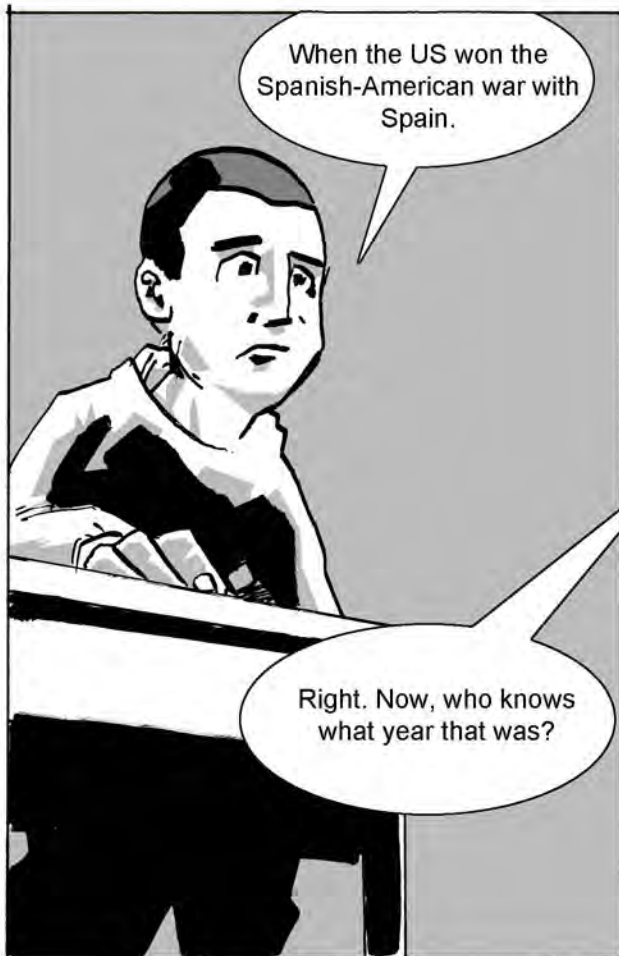
Nothing you have to worry about, young lady.

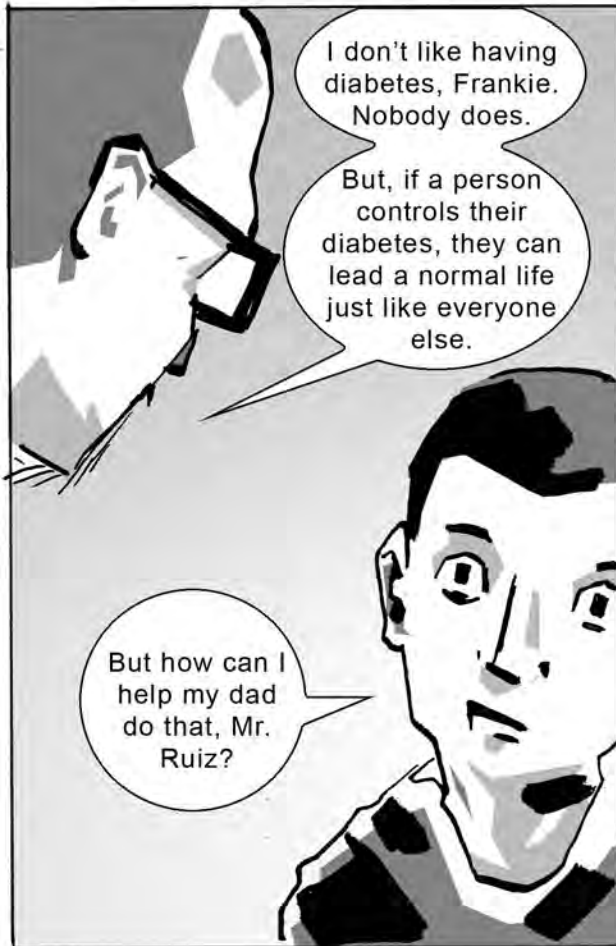
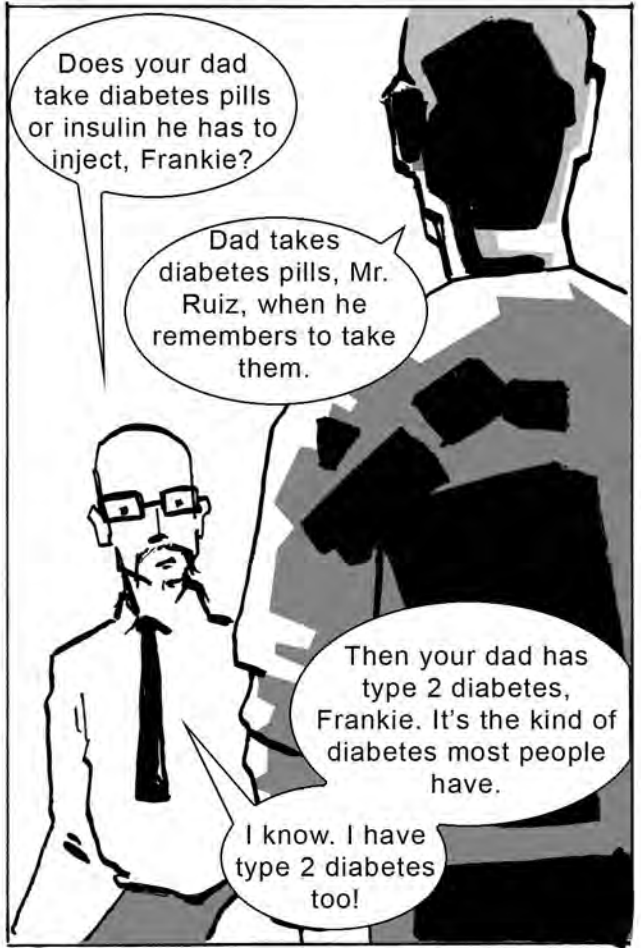


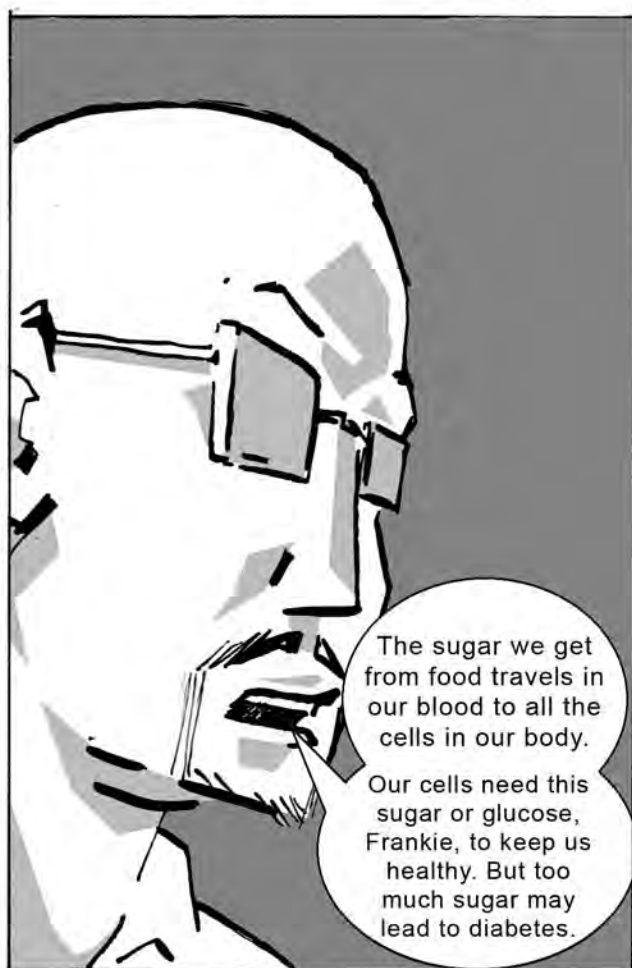
Yeah, Dad. Like you know.

The Next Morning...











Insulin helps keep the level of sugar in our body just right.

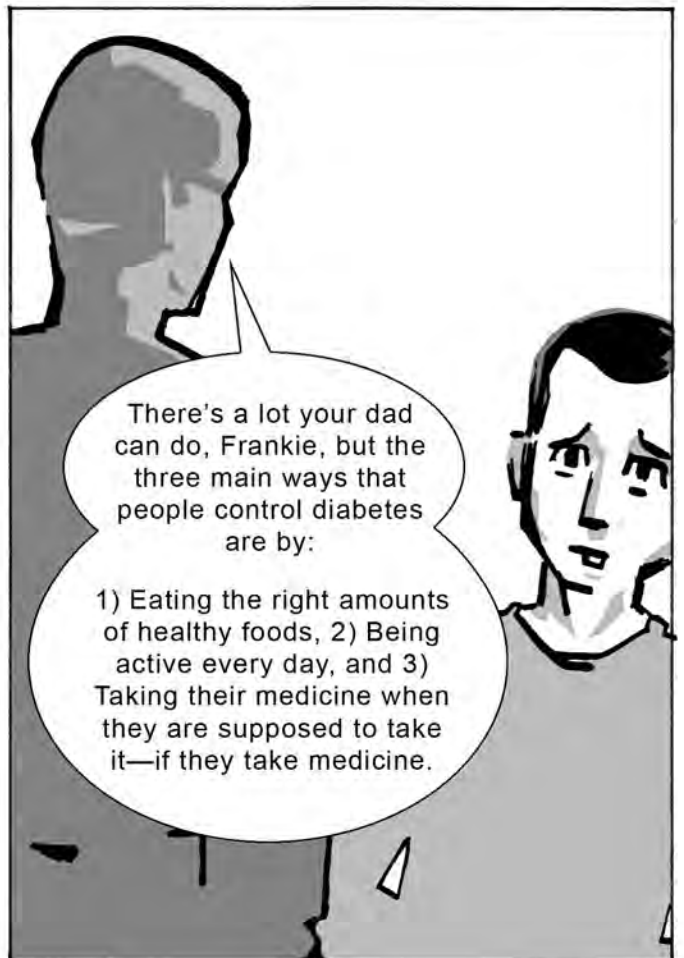
Without the right amount of insulin, the sugar in our blood can't get into our cells to give us energy.

Over time, high blood sugar levels that don't come down cause diabetes.

The goal for everyone with diabetes is to keep their blood sugar normal—or as close to normal as possible.

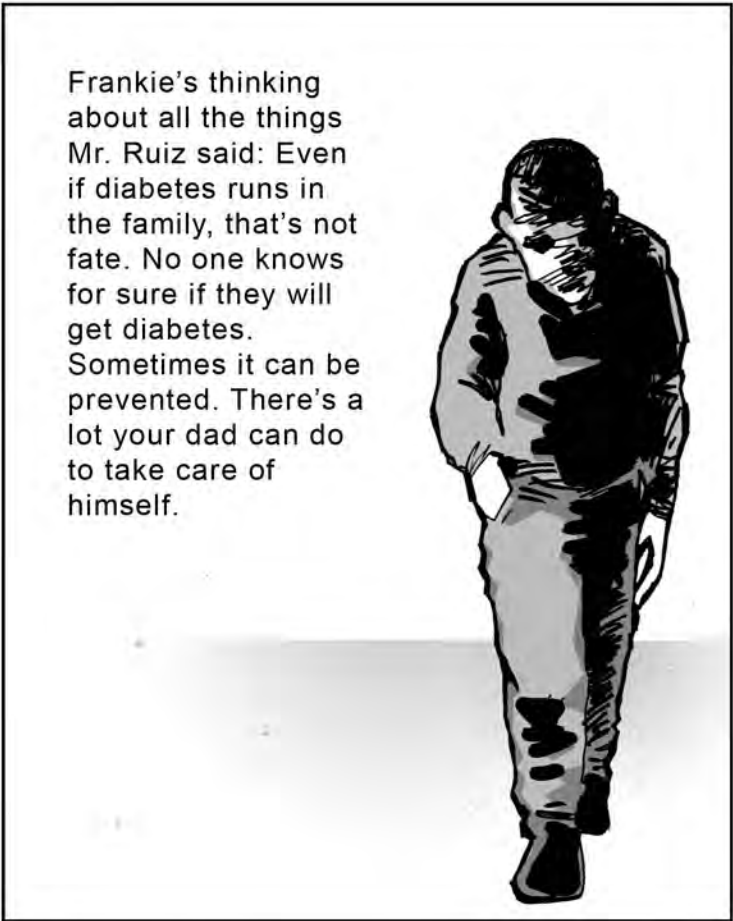


What should my dad be doing, Mr. Ruiz?

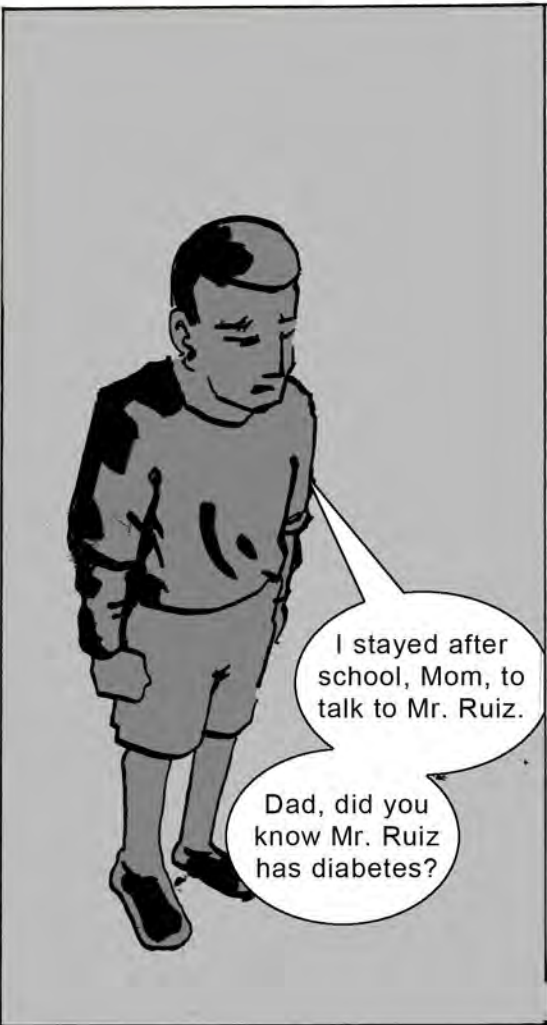


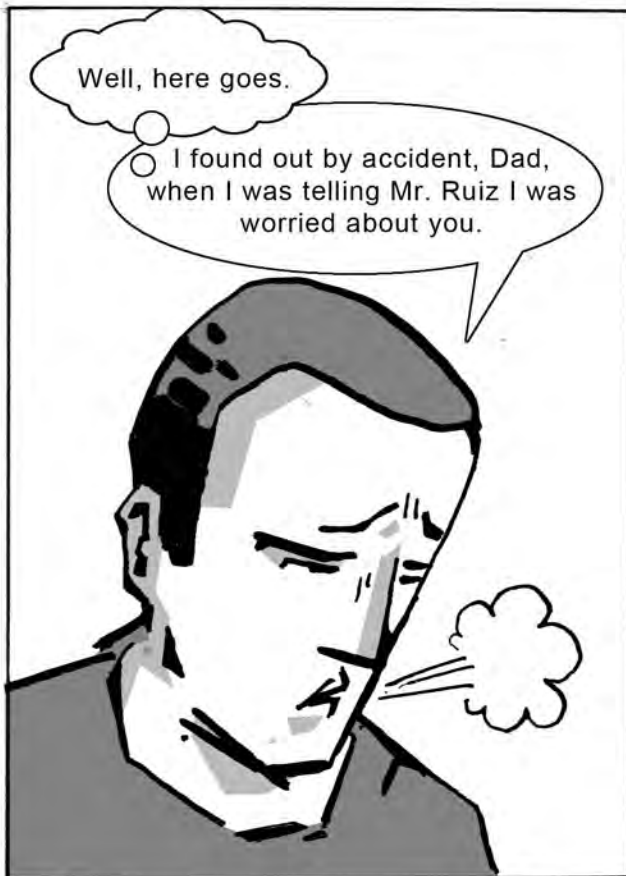
There's a lot your dad can do, Frankie, but the three main ways that people control diabetes are by:

- 1) Eating the right amounts of healthy foods, 2) Being active every day, and 3) Taking their medicine when they are supposed to take it—if they take medicine.



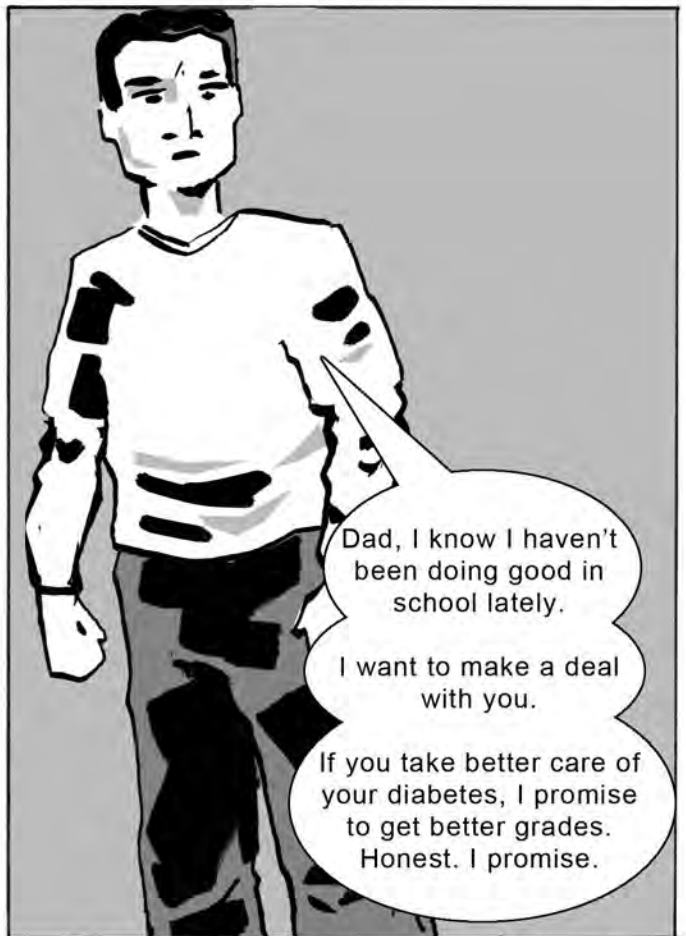
Frankie decides to tell Dad how worried he is at times about Dad having diabetes. He wants to make a deal with his dad. He will do better in school, which he knows Mom and Dad would really like, if Dad will take better care of his diabetes.







Dad feels bad about the way he just spoke to his wife. But, Frankie can see he's getting angry, too. Frankie has to do something quick.





Frankie, you're that worried about my diabetes?



No one seems to know what to say.



I don't like to talk about my diabetes. I don't like to think about diabetes.

I'm sick of diabetes!

But, I (cough) know you mean well, Son.



Go get ready for dinner now.

I want to talk to your mother.



Dinner was quiet that night. Frankie could tell when Mom and Dad were "acting." Everything was OK, but quiet. Frankie was worried. Did he say too much? Did he hurt Dad's feelings?



THAT NIGHT AFTER DINNER



Frankie's mom helped Charles come up with a list of things he could do to help his diabetes.

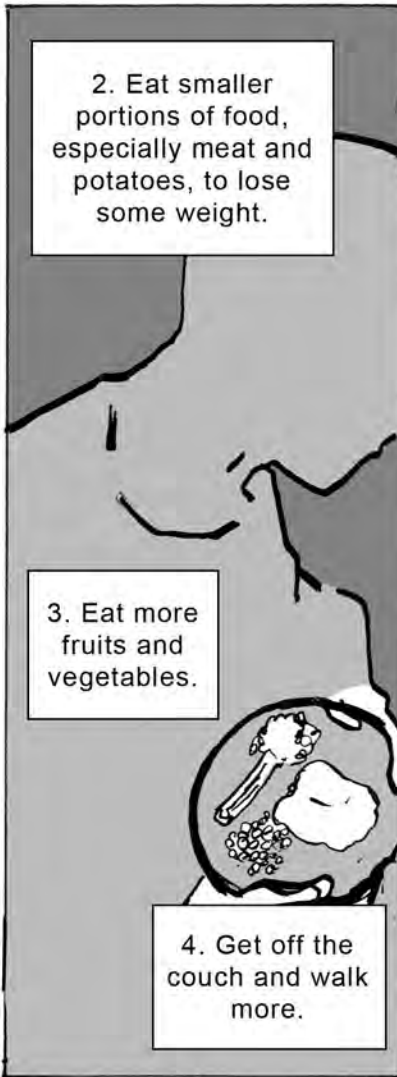
1. Take his diabetes medicine every day.



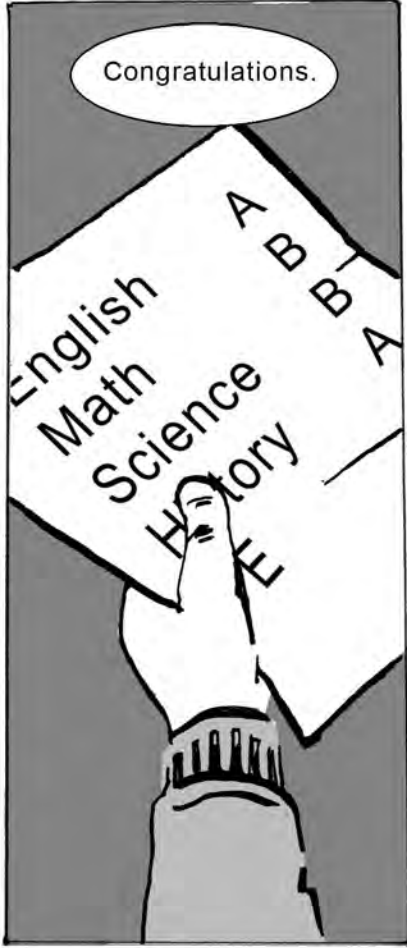
2. Eat smaller portions of food, especially meat and potatoes, to lose some weight.

3. Eat more fruits and vegetables.

4. Get off the couch and walk more.



Charles knew it wasn't going to be easy. But it was time. Time to control his diabetes once and for all.



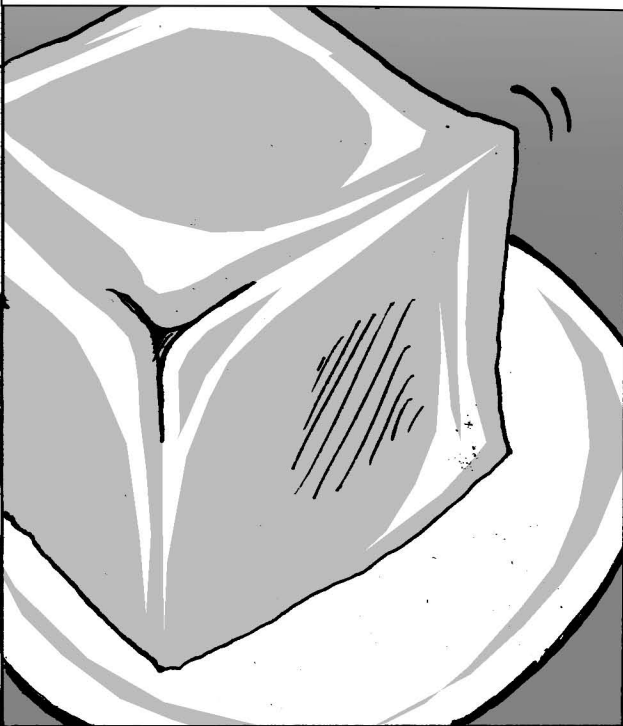




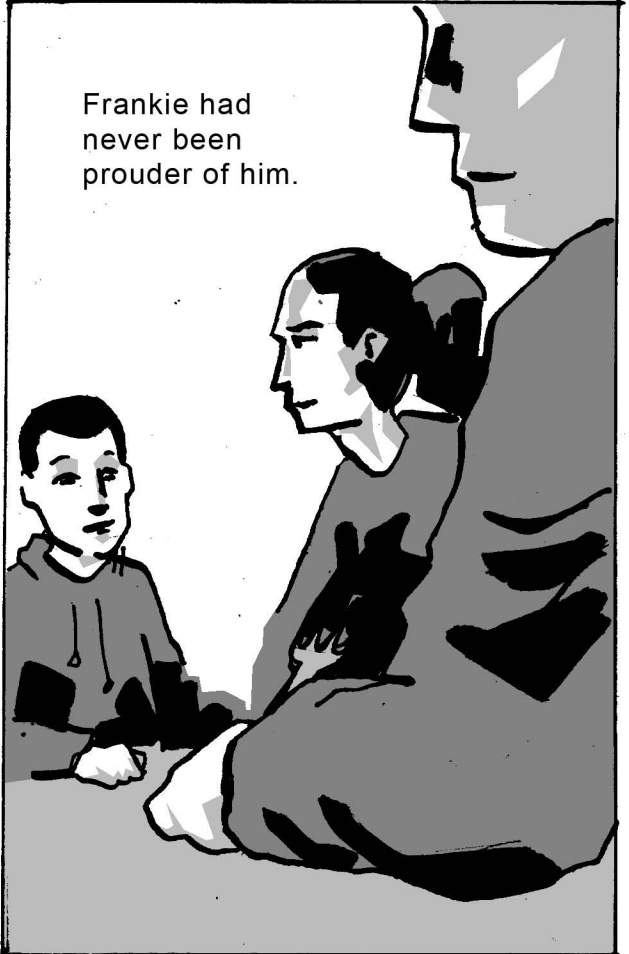
Frankie knew it was the best meal they had shared together in a long time.



Frankie's Dad also resisted the urge to get his favorite dessert, double-chocolate cake, and ordered Jell-O instead.



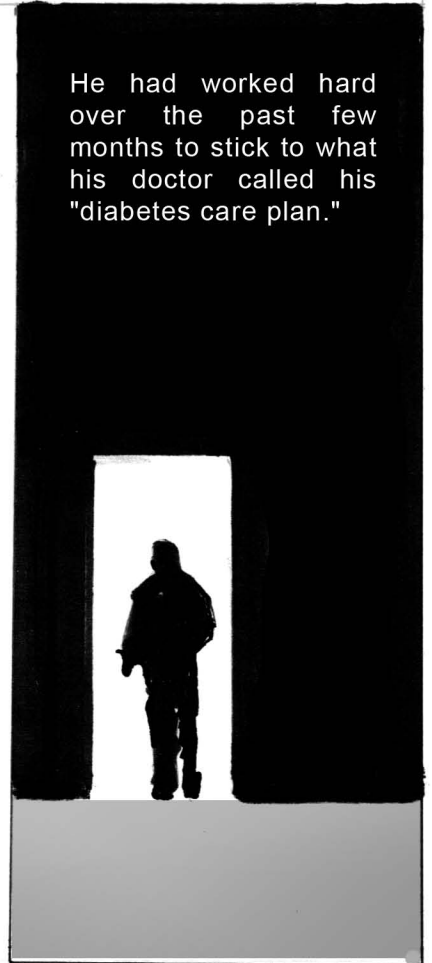
Frankie had never been prouder of him.



Charles was proud of his son, not only for improving his grades, but also for helping him to get serious about taking care of his diabetes.

The sore on his leg was gone and he had never felt healthier.

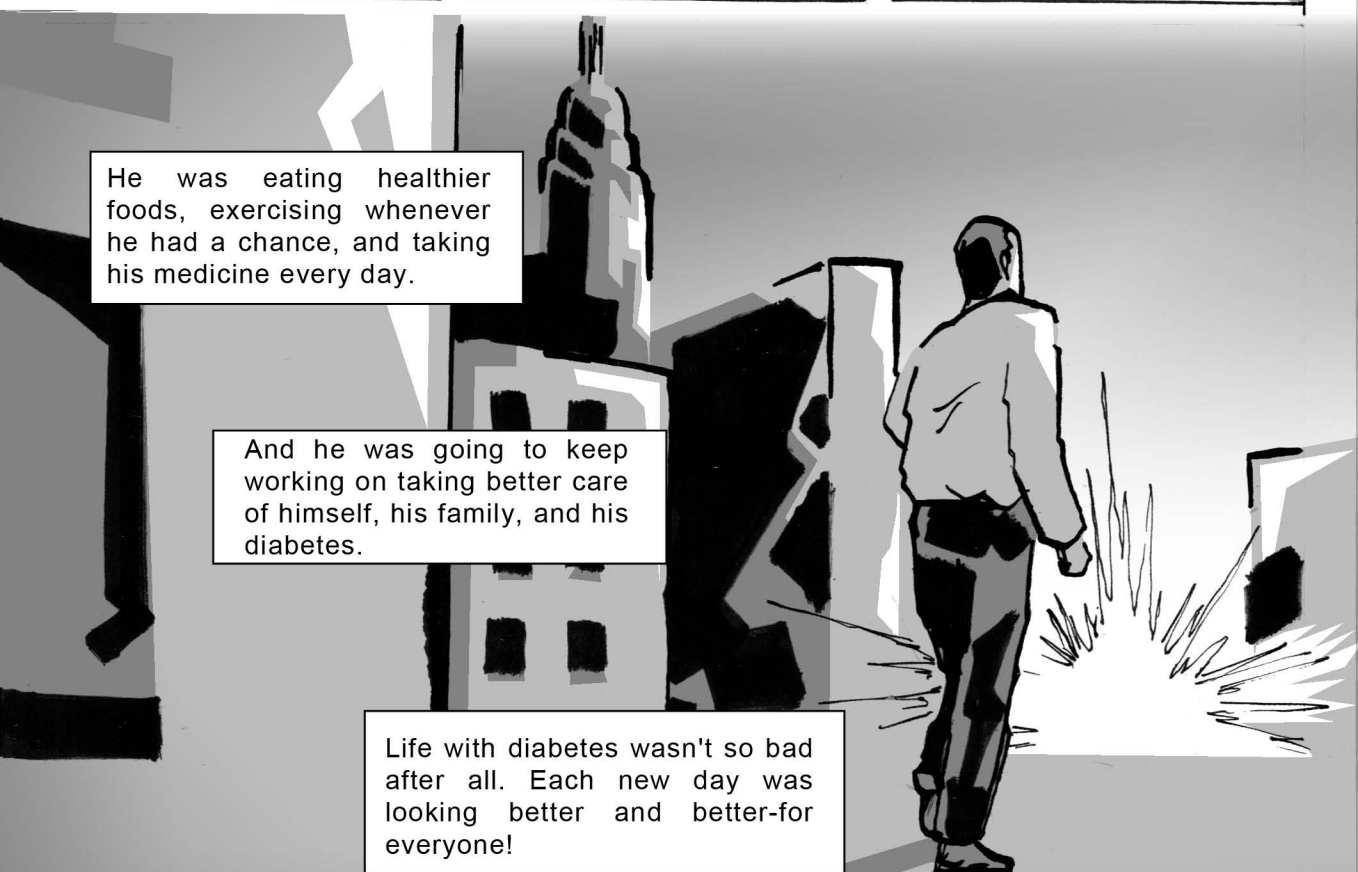
He had worked hard over the past few months to stick to what his doctor called his "diabetes care plan."



He was eating healthier foods, exercising whenever he had a chance, and taking his medicine every day.

And he was going to keep working on taking better care of himself, his family, and his diabetes.

Life with diabetes wasn't so bad after all. Each new day was looking better and better-for everyone!



WHAT ABOUT YOU?



If you have diabetes, is your blood sugar under good control? If your answer is "Yes", great. But, if your answer is "No" or "I don't know," call your doctor or health clinic today to get back on track with taking better care of yourself and your diabetes.

Diabetes support groups are another way many people with diabetes learn to take better care of their diabetes. People just like you with diabetes meet once a month to share real-world ideas about how to manage diabetes. You can check for a support group in your area by calling:

Your doctor or diabetes clinic

Your church

The local office of the
American Diabetes
Association

The YMCA or YWCA in
your area



WHO HAS DIABETES?

Anyone can have diabetes. You can find information about the signs of diabetes and a lot more on our web site, www.learningaboutdiabetes.org, and on the American Diabetes Association web site, www.diabetes.org. Both web sites offer free booklets, handouts, and stories like this one to help you better understand and manage diabetes, or to help others with diabetes.

Don't be afraid to find out if you have diabetes. There are millions of people with diabetes who live full and happy lives. You can too!