

# Managing Diabetes At School

There is some important information about which schools, teachers, and classmates need to be aware with regards to diabetes. It is important that your school be prepared for any diabetes-related emergency that may arise for your child. The school nurse should be part of the child's school care team. Everyone in contact with a diabetic child needs to be ready to provide the required support.

It is important at all times to take a diabetic child seriously if he makes a request for a drink of water, needs a snack, or needs to use the rest room. The child's body is telling them what it requires to remain in good health. Remember that a diabetic child has normal interests and dreams identical dreams to other children. It is important that a diabetic child be treated as normally as possible. It is imperative that the lines of communication between home and the classroom should remain open.

Informing classmates that the child has diabetes is acceptable as long as it is presented in a positive way. The class should be educated about possible diabetes-related emergencies but they should also know that diabetics are kids just like they are. What is the best way to tell classmates and what should you say? Following are a few suggestions. A family member may want to prepare and present a brief presentation to teach the class about the disease. They could provide information according to their education-level and should be prepared to respond to questions. Questions will be asked; it is natural for children to be curious and they will appreciate honest, truthful answers in response to their questions.

The class should be instructed in terms they can understand, what diabetes is and its effects on the body. Tell them that that children with diabetes will take shots to manage their disease. Tell them about blood sugar and its important to the brain and nervous system. Identifying the signs of an insulin reaction may be an important part of this presentation. Explaining chemical changes that occur in a diabetic's body will help them be understanding when low blood sugar causes unusual behavior in their classmate. Symptoms of these changes include unusual anger, grouchiness, headaches, falling asleep unexpectedly, or being confused about simple things. Children should be told that when a diabetic reacts to chemical changes he or she may sweat, act shaky, feel as though they have butterflies in their stomach, or look pale. If their classmate is preparing to give an oral report or to take an important test, they may find their blood sugar dropping. Some symptoms may indicate their need to have a small snack to keep their blood sugar levels under control.

Children should know that a diabetic child may not notice their signs of low blood sugar when they are having lots of fun or they are doing something of particular interest to them. It is important to remember that diabetic children should abstain from simple sugar. Though they generally should refrain from eating sweets, eating a sugar cube, a piece of candy, fruit juice, or soda will help bring elevate and normalize their blood sugar levels.