

SAFE AT SCHOOL CAMPAIGN: Keeping Students with Diabetes Safe at School

Why is diabetes care needed at school?

- Diabetes must be managed 24/7.
- Effective management is crucial to prevent short-term complications such as life-threatening low blood glucose (sugar) levels, (known as hypoglycemia) and long-term complications such as heart and kidney disease, blindness, and amputation.
- Appropriate school diabetes care enhances a student's ability to learn and to participate fully in all school activities.

School Diabetes Care Success Stories:

Training teachers, school secretaries, and other school staff members has enhanced the ability of our school nurses to provide safe and timely care to our students with diabetes. We have had an outpouring of school staff volunteer to be trained.

-Cathy Sturgeon, RN, BSN, Coordinator of Student Health Services, Loudoun County (VA) Public Schools-

I was on call the morning one of my patient's teachers called to tell me she had administered glucagon to him during an overnight field trip. By the time she called me the student was awake and wondering why an ambulance was waiting to take him to the Emergency Room which was 40 miles away. This teacher saved precious time in administering glucagon.

-Linda Siminerio, RN, PhD, CDE,
Pittsburgh, PA -

What tasks are necessary to provide appropriate diabetes care at school?

- Blood glucose monitoring.
- Recognition and treatment of dangerously high or low blood glucose (sugar) levels.
- Insulin and glucagon administration.
- Consumption of appropriate food and access to food when needed.
- Participation in physical activity.

The teachers and staff at my son's elementary school have been amazing. They participated in a training offered by local nurses, and have been key team members in keeping my son safe at school.

-Nell German, Parent, Chillicothe, IL-

The three basic principles of safe school diabetes care at school are:

1. All school staff members who have responsibility for a student with diabetes should receive training that provides a basic understanding of the disease and the student's needs, how to identify medical emergencies, and which school staff members to contact with questions or in case of an emergency.
2. The school nurse holds a primary role of coordinating, monitoring, and supervising the care of a student with diabetes. However, in addition to any full- or part-time school nurse, a small group of school staff members should receive training from a qualified health care professional in routine and emergency diabetes care so that a staff member is always available for younger or less-experienced students who require assistance with their diabetes management (e.g., administering insulin, checking their blood glucose, choosing appropriate food) and for all students with diabetes in case of an emergency (including administration of glucagon). These staff members should be school personnel who have volunteered to do these tasks and do not need to be health care professionals.
3. Children possessing the necessary skills and maturity to do so should be permitted to self-manage their disease in the classroom or wherever they are in conjunction with a school related activity. Such self-management should include monitoring blood glucose and responding to blood glucose levels with needed food and medication while utilizing appropriate safety protocols.

These principles are endorsed by: *American Academy of Pediatrics, American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists, American Association of Diabetes Educators, American Diabetes Association, American Dietetic Association, Children with Diabetes, Disability Rights Education Defense Fund, Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, Lawson Wilkins Pediatric Endocrine Society, Pediatric Endocrine Nursing Society.*

ADA Safe at School Campaign Accomplishments

- Developed resources for parents, schools, and health care professionals.
- Implemented model school plans through education, negotiation, and litigation.
- Enacted school diabetes care legislation in select states.

Join the American Diabetes Association's Safe at School Campaign

Register with ADA's online advocacy center at <http://advocacy.diabetes.org>
and email us at ActionAlertSchoolResponses@diabetes.org

You will receive updates and information on how you can support Safe at School efforts.