



# A Guide to Diabetes Management In the School Setting

## What is diabetes?

Diabetes mellitus (DM) is a complex, multi-system disease affecting the metabolism of fats, proteins and carbohydrates caused by an insufficient production of insulin by the pancreas or by the body's inability to use and secrete insulin. There are two main types of diabetes: Type 1 and Type 2. With Type 1 diabetes, the pancreas does not produce insulin. It is the most common type of diabetes afflicting school-age children and requires careful monitoring and treatment with insulin. With Type 2 diabetes, the body becomes resistant to the insulin produced by the body and is most often treated with oral medications. Type 2 diabetes has increased dramatically in children and can be associated with obesity.

## Do students with diabetes take medications for this condition?

Yes. Most children with a diagnosis of diabetes are insulin-dependent. The student may have to visit the school nurse at scheduled times for blood testing for glucose levels and/or may require insulin injections. The student may require testing of his/her urine for ketones. Some students receive their insulin requirements with an insulin pump that automatically injects calculated amounts of insulin throughout the school day.

## What are the common symptoms observed in a student with diabetes?

The most common symptoms seen in a student diagnosed with diabetes will be associated with hypoglycemia (low blood sugar). This can happen if the student takes his/her insulin and then has an insufficient or delayed meal or increased periods of exercise.

The symptoms of **hypoglycemia (low blood sugar)** may include:

- \* hunger
- \* lethargy, sleepiness, light-headedness
- \* shakiness
- \* fast heart beat, rapid breathing
- \* unconsciousness, convulsions
- \* personality change, irritability, crying
- \* headache, pale
- \* inability to follow directions
- \* cold, clammy skin, profuse sweating

## What should I do if I notice symptoms of hypoglycemia?

The nurse must evaluate the student immediately. Depending on the student's Individual Health Plan (IHP), blood sugar level, and level of consciousness, the student may be able to be treated at school. If the student needs to go to the clinic, make sure he/she goes with a responsible older buddy/adult. **Do not send a symptomatic student to the clinic unescorted.** This situation can rapidly become a medical emergency and it may be necessary to implement emergency procedures per the student's Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP)/Emergency Action Plan (EAP).

## What other symptoms may be observed?

Diabetic students can also develop symptoms of **hyperglycemia (high blood sugar)**. This can occur when the body gets too little insulin, too much food, too little exercise or may be caused by stress or an illness.

The symptoms of **hyperglycemia (high blood sugar)** may include:

- \* Excessive thirst
- \* Frequent urination/trips to the restroom
- \* Fast heart rate, rapid breathing
- \* Blurry vision
- \* Nausea/Vomiting

Hyperglycemia generally requires treatment and the IHP/EAP should be followed.

**How can I help a diabetic student be more successful in my classroom?**

- Maintain confidentiality.
- Treat students with diabetes as normal as possible, but keep in mind their dietary needs and special accommodations.
- Stay in regular contact with your school nurse and the student's parent regarding the student's status and become knowledgeable and familiar with a diabetic student's Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP)/Emergency Action Plan (EAP), meal plan and emergency protocol.
- It may be necessary for a student with diabetes to eat a snack in your classroom to maintain adequate blood sugar levels.
- Students with diabetes should have access to water and unlimited bathroom privileges.
- Include information about the student's special accommodations in your sub folder and make sure that the folder is easily accessible for subs.
- Encourage the student with diabetes to participate fully in physical activities, unless the student is symptomatic or IHP/EAP indicates otherwise.
- Please inform the school nurse at least two weeks in advance of any field trips.
- Familiarize yourself with the trained unlicensed diabetes care assistant(s) on your campus. The school nurse or principal will be able to provide this information to you.
- Encourage independence and diabetes management at home, as well as at school.

**Remember, it is the responsibility of the teacher, student, and nurse to ensure that the student receives the proper care at school during the school day.**

**Resources:**

American Diabetes Association (1-800-DIABETES)

<http://www.diabetes.org>

Centers for Disease Control

<http://www.cdc.gov>

Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation International

<http://jdf.org>

Children with Diabetes

<http://www.childrenwithdiabetes.com>

For further information, please contact your campus Registered Nurse or Tricia Atzger-John, MSN, RN, Keller ISD Director of Health Services, at 817-744-1241.



Health Services Department  
Individual Healthcare Plan/Emergency Action Plan for Diabetic Student

**Student:**

**DOB:**

**Diagnosis:**

**School:**

Nursing portion of IHP, including assessment and history, must be completed for student on the Electronic Health record. Attach **Diabetes Management Plan from Physician** to this form. The plan must be updated at the beginning of each school year or whenever there is a change.

Nurse must verify Diabetes Management Plan from physician contains instructions for these components: Blood sugar testing: Yes  No  Action for Hypoglycemia: Yes  No  Action for Hyperglycemia: Yes  No   
Ketone Testing: Yes  No  Medication Regimen including Glucagon: Yes  No  Meal Plan: Yes  No   
Per physician and school nurse assessment, is student able to self-manage? Yes  No  Requires assistance  Dependent upon trained staff

Classroom teacher should include information about student's plan in classroom substitute folder. Diabetic students are allowed to use the bathroom as needed and have access to water at all times.

**If student is experiencing symptoms of hypoglycemia/hyperglycemia, the student should be escorted to the clinic for assessment. If student is unconscious, unresponsive and/or seizing, contact school nurse and 911. If trained by school nurse, treat according to attached Diabetes Management Plan/Physician's order.**

Symptoms of hypoglycemia (low blood sugar): trembling, sweating, hunger, shaking, pale, weak, dizzy, sleepy, lethargic, irritable, anxiety, behavior changes, blurred vision, confusion, loss of consciousness and/or seizures. Student may not be able to describe symptoms. Hypoglycemia can potentially be life threatening and student should never be left alone.

Symptoms of hyperglycemia (high blood sugar): thirst, frequent urination, fatigue, flushing of skin, dry mouth, nausea, vomiting, sweet fruity breath, labored breathing, confusion and/or loss of consciousness.

If physician has provided written approval for parent to change the insulin to carb ratio, parent will use form provided by nurse to communicate changes.

**Additional Information:** (action in case of pump failure; plan for field trip and/or schedule changes, snacks in the classroom, crisis plan, etc.)



Health Services Department

Individual Healthcare Plan/Emergency Action Plan for Diabetic Student

Supplies for this student will be provided by the parent and kept in the following locations. Supplies should accompany the student on field trips.

Supplies	Location
Blood Glucose Testing Supplies	
Sources of Carbohydrates	
Ketone testing strips	
Insulin and syringes	
Pump supplies and pump manual/directions	
Glucagon	
Crisis Supplies	

**Meal Plan:** It may be necessary for the student to have a snack if feeling symptomatic.

	Time	Location/Storage	# of Carbohydrates
Breakfast			
Mid- AM Snack			
Lunch			
Mid-PM Snack			

**Trained Unlicensed Diabetic Care Assistants:**

Name	Job Title	Location	Contact Information

**Emergency Contact Information:**

	Name	Emergency #	Home #	Work #
Parent/Guardian				
Parent/Guardian				
Emergency Contact				
Physician Contact				
Hospital/Clinic				

*The above procedures, including orders provided from physician in Diabetes Management Plan, may be administered by the school nurse and/or trained Unlicensed Diabetes Care Assistant (UDCA). The trained UDCA will be designated by the school principal. I understand that the unlicensed employee is immune from liability for civil damages under Section 22.0511 of the Texas Administrative Code. I give permission for the school nurse to share this plan with school employees as needed to maintain my child's health and safety.*

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Acknowledged and Received By:

Principal: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

School Nurse: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Licensed Vocational Nurse: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_