



Children's Health Update

Heading Back to School with Diabetes

By the National Diabetes
Education Program

(NAPSA)—Diabetes is one of the most common chronic diseases in children. For students with diabetes and their parents, getting ready for a new school year includes a lot more than buying new clothes, backpacks, notebooks, and pens. It means buying a whole list of diabetes supplies to keep at school—but also preparing school staff to help keep their children safe at school and at school-sponsored activities.

“Nobody knows your child’s day-to-day needs and how to respond to a diabetes emergency better than you,” said Griffin P. Rodgers, M.D., Director of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). “That’s why it is so important to start the school year as part of the school health team, and to keep open the lines of communication throughout the school year.”

Both parents and school personnel can get the guidance they need from an invaluable manual, *Helping the Student with Diabetes Succeed: A Guide for School Personnel*. This guide was produced by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ National Diabetes Education Program (NDEP) and is an essential resource for parents, schools, and health care professionals.

As the school year begins, parents of youth with diabetes are encouraged to follow these tips from the NDEP *School Guide* to help ensure their children’s safety



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and well-being.

•**Take action.** Notify the school right away that your child has diabetes. Allow the sharing of medical information to keep your child safe and provide up-to-date emergency contact numbers to the school.

•**Work with your child’s health care team to develop a “Diabetes Medical Management Plan.”** This plan contains the medical orders for your child. It should be signed by the health care team and submitted to the school nurse at the start of each school year. An updated plan is needed if there are changes in your child’s diabetes care plan during the year. A sample plan is included in the NDEP *School Guide*.

•**Meet with the school nurse**

to go over your child’s school health care plans. The school nurse will use the medical orders to prepare your child’s routine and emergency diabetes care plans at school. You can find samples of these plans in the *School Guide*.

•**Provide the school with all supplies, medicines, and items needed to carry out your child’s health care and emergency plans.** This includes blood glucose testing items, supplies for taking insulin and urine and blood ketone testing, snacks, quick-acting glucose products, and a glucagon kit.

•**Be an active member of the school health team.** The *School Guide* includes action plans for all school personnel, and for you and your child to work together to manage diabetes care at school. Go over these checklists with your child so both of you can work as a team with school staff throughout the school year.

To order a free copy of NDEP’s *Helping the Student with Diabetes Succeed: A Guide for School Personnel*, call 1-888-693-NDEP (1-888-693-6337), TTY: 1-866-569-1162 or visit www.YourDiabetesInfo.org. You can download a copy of the guide and find more information about children with diabetes at this website.

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