Back to School

Returning to school when you have diabetes can be scary for the parents and the child. Here’s a simple reference for you to determine what you need to do to prepare:

1. Most importantly, set up a meeting with school personnel who will be involved in your child’s daily routine at school. This may involve:
   - School nurse
   - School principal
   - Teacher(s)
   - Lunchroom employees
   - Bus driver
   - Playground supervisors
   - Secretary
   - Coach for sports

2. You need to establish responsibilities so that there is always open communication.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>School Personnel</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Be involved in your school plan</td>
<td>Provide a diabetes plan to school each year</td>
<td>Request a current diabetes plan each school year</td>
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<td>Communicate any symptoms or problems to school personnel &amp; parent/guardian</td>
<td>Review basic diabetes treatment guidelines with trained school personnel</td>
<td>Keep treatment guidelines readily accessible</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Provide permission for school nurse to delegate diabetes care to other trained personnel</td>
<td>Delegate diabetes care to other trained staff as “back-up” support</td>
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<td>Investigate school menus &amp; request carbohydrate content information</td>
<td>Assist with detection &amp; treatment of low blood sugar</td>
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<td>Update school personnel whenever plan changes</td>
<td>Provide information regarding meals/carb content</td>
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<td>Provide diabetes supplies &amp; equipment and be able to provide instruction to school</td>
<td>Request parents maintain an updated diabetes plan of care</td>
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<td>Provide emergency contact information</td>
<td>Discuss any questions regarding the plan with parents &amp;/or Diabetes team</td>
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<td>Discuss a communication plan with school on obtaining blood sugar readings &amp; insulin dose records</td>
<td>Notify parent/student of anticipated activity &amp;/or schedule changes</td>
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<td>Be familiar with emergency diabetes guidelines</td>
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<td>Provide ready access to restroom facilities &amp; drinking water</td>
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3. Provide supplies: It is also a good idea to have a consolidated diabetes kit for any other school personnel who may occasionally care for your child, such as PE teachers, coaches, bus drivers, or teachers.

- Insulin, syringes or pen needles
- Blood sugar meter, strips, & lancets
- Ketone strips, alcohol wipes
- Food to treat low blood sugar (juice, tabs)
- Glucagon kit
- Food for snacks
- Batteries
- Extra pump supplies (if applicable)

4. Meal planning: The primary issue is to decide who will be responsible for the food items placed on your child’s meal tray. Most importantly you should:

- Determine the meals given at school by obtaining a school menu
- Obtain information on the carbohydrate content of foods for the portion sizes served
- Ask if special food products such as sugar-free: Jell-O, syrup, or jelly are available on request
- Provide examples of food-substitutes that are allowed if your child is unable to finish their meal for the insulin dose already taken
- Designate a responsible adult your child can go to if all of their food was not eaten, even if the meal comes from home
- Remind school personnel that no meal or snack should be omitted or delayed

5. Precautions: Basic preparations and precautions can be taken to prevent unnecessary complications:

- A method for recording and reporting blood sugar results needs to be discussed
- Express importance to your child and all school staff of the importance of early detection and treatment of low blood sugars. Time is critical when the blood sugar is low.
- Liquid or easy to consume carbs should be readily available to student at all times
- The student should be escorted to health office if symptoms of low blood sugar occur. They should never be left alone.

6. Plan changes: Examples of situations that may cause a change in your child’s careplan include: field trips, PE days, or class parties. Establish open communication with the school so these situations can be prepared for.

7. Absences for diabetes related illnesses: a note excusing your child from school may only be provided if office is aware of illness at that time.