

Diabetes: Drug or Chemical Induced (DCID)

What is diabetes?

Sugars, like glucose, are carbohydrates. They are in many foods. Normally when you eat, some food breaks down into sugar. Sugar enters your bloodstream and the blood levels of sugar rise. The rise tells the pancreas to let out **insulin**.

Insulin helps sugar move from your blood into your cells where it is used for energy. Sugar is the fuel for your body. Without insulin, your body cannot use the food you eat.

With diabetes, the body does not make or use insulin the way it should.

What causes drug or chemical induced diabetes?

- Many kinds of drugs can interfere with the body's insulin. The most common are **steroids or anti-rejection medicines** used with transplant patients.
- When someone is ill or taking steroids their body releases more sugar from the liver and their body loses some ability to get rid of the extra sugar.
- Anti-rejection drugs and some chemotherapy agents can affect a body's ability to release enough insulin to help use the sugar your child ate.
- If it is not treated, the high blood sugars can cause other problems such as weight loss, infections, weakness and dehydration.
- DCID may go away when your child is done taking the medicine. Do not stop giving the medicine unless the doctor tells you to.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms can include:

- Being very thirsty.
- Urinating a lot.
- Weight loss.
- Feeling tired or crabby.
- Cuts or scrapes that do not heal well.
- Infections.
- Yeast infections.

Some people with DCID do not have symptoms. The diabetes is found because a healthcare provider checked their blood sugar levels.

How is it treated?

A diabetes doctor, called an Endocrinologist will help plan the treatment. The goal is to get your child's blood sugar level lower so their body can use the food they eat. Your child needs energy to get well. Most often, insulin shots are needed.

The only way to give insulin is with a shot. The needles used to give insulin are very short and thin. Your healthcare provider will teach you how to draw up insulin and give shots. You may also ask a home health nurse to help once you get home. Pills may also be used with the insulin.

Insulin

There are two types of insulin. You may need one or both types of insulin:

- **Fast-acting** insulin. This is normally given with meals or large snacks.
- **Long-acting or background** insulin, which most often is given once or twice a day.

Checking your blood sugar

- You will need to check your child's blood sugar about 4 times each day. The doctor or nurse will tell you when you will need to do this.
- You learn how to check blood sugar with a blood glucose meter. You will need to prick your child's finger to get a small drop of blood to put on a test strip.
- It is important to keep track of the blood sugar levels in a log book. Write the numbers down and share with your healthcare providers. This gives them the information they need to make changes in medicines.

Regular care is important. Your Endocrinologist will help you with dosing information and diabetes care. You may also meet with a nurse specially trained in diabetes, called a Diabetes Educator. This nurse will help you learn more about your child's condition and how to manage it. It is very important to control diabetes so it does not get worse.

ALERT: Call your doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if you have special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

This teaching sheet is meant to help you care for your child. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up.