

What is diabetes?

When you eat, some foods (called carbohydrates) break 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 (DCID)?

- Many kinds of drugs can cause problems 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 like weight loss, infections, weakness and dehydration. It can delay healing or complicate your child's treatment course.
- 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.
- Weight loss.
- Cuts or scrapes that do not heal well.
- Yeast infections.
- Peeing a lot.
- Feeling tired or crabby.
- Infections.
- Blurry vision.

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 lower your child's blood sugar level lower and to allow their body to use the food they eat. Your child needs energy to get well. DCID is most often treated with changes to your child's diet. Insulin shots may be needed, too.

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 check your child's blood sugar level and give insulin. You may also ask a home health nurse to help once you get home. Pills may also be used with the insulin in some cases.

Insulin

There are different types of insulin. Your doctor will tell you which types of insulin your child needs.

Checking your blood sugar

- You will need to check your child's blood sugar every day. The doctor or nurse will tell you how often you will need to do this.
- You will learn how to check blood sugar with a blood glucose meter. You will 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 other members of the diabetes team to learn more about your child's condition and how to manage it. It is very important to control diabetes so your child can heal.

For more health and wellness information, check out this resource:

<https://kidshealth.org/ChildrensWi/en/parents>

ALERT: Call your child's doctor, nurse or clinic if you or your child have any concerns or your child has special health care needs not covered by this information.

This document was created to help you care for your child or family member. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment and follow-up.