



Dear Parent,

This letter is to assist for informational purposes regarding concerns about COVID19 and the safety of your child. The return to in-person schooling is a personal/family decision based on current information provided by your local school districts and state and federal guidelines. We find that the more information you have can help you during this evolving time.

The current American Academy of Pediatrics position statement has made the recommendation for children to return to in-person school for multiple reasons including but not limited to learning, social interaction, addressing social needs, etc. As a team, we support the Alabama Department of Health (ADPH) www.alabamapublichealth.gov and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) www.cdc.gov recommendations for precautions including wear masks, hand hygiene, socially distancing, etc., whether in school or out in the community. Many school districts are still working out the specific rules and recommendations related to children of different ages and ability to understand and comply with various rules. For the most updated recommendation, please check with your school. We encourage you to be advocates in your local communities.

According to the current information from the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF) www.jdrf.org individuals with diabetes are NOT at a higher risk for contracting COVID-19 (see attached guidelines from JDRF). However, those with obesity, hypertension, and higher hemoglobin A1c may be more likely to have complications associated with a COVID 19 infection. The best way to prevent chances for having these complications is to be sure to follow your healthcare team's recommendations of taking insulin and other medicines consistently and keeping blood sugars in range. In children with diabetes taking insulin, the greatest concern with ANY illness is the risk associated with developing ketones and diabetic ketoacidosis. We encourage everyone to please keep a close eye on blood sugars and follow sick day guidelines, including testing for ketones. If you DO NOT have your sick day guidelines at home we will be more than happy to provide a current copy to you.

Whether you decide to have your child attend school or continue at-home learning, we wish all of our families a healthy and successful 2021 school year! Thank you for allowing us to continue to care for your family.

Sincerely,

Your Pediatric Diabetes Care Team
University of Alabama at Birmingham/
Children's of Alabama
205-638-9107 (ph)

Type 1 Diabetes (T1D) and viral illnesses [from JDRF.org](https://www.jdrf.org)

1. People with T1D are NOT more at-risk of coming down with COVID-19.

- According to several physicians whose expertise includes T1D, people with T1D **are not** more susceptible to coming down with COVID-19.
- Experts further say that if someone with T1D does contract COVID-19, they are **NOT** necessarily at higher risk of developing serious complications from the disease.

2. Monitor your blood glucose and ketones more than usual, if ill.

- Please follow sick-day guidelines.
- Be on the lookout for ketones, as very high levels could lead to diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA).
- Other signs of DKA include flu-like symptoms (feeling tired, weak, aches, nausea or vomiting, abdominal pain), dehydration and also a fruity smell to the breath with more rapid breathing, which happens when the body is trying to eliminate the ketones and acid.
- If you have vomiting, moderate or large ketones, symptoms of DKA, contact the clinic.

3. It is more important than ever to continue a normal schedule of medications.

- This can be challenging when you feel sick, especially if you're having a hard time keeping food and liquid down.

4. Stock your cabinets with items that will help you if you are not feeling well.

- Foods like crackers, vegetable or noodle soups, unsweetened applesauce, or fruit-flavored yogurt are all easy-on-the-stomach selections.
- It's important to stay well hydrated, especially when ketones are present, to flush them out. Increase your intake of carb-free choices like water, broth, and sugar-free gelatin, popsicles or soft drinks.

5. Be prepared, just in case.

- It is vital to be ready for the worst, even if (hopefully) you never experience it.
- Ensure that you have diabetes medical supplies on hand and have access to refills in the event that you are quarantined.
- **Contact Diabetes clinic if:** large ketones and experiencing hyperglycemia.
- **Contact your PCP (pediatrician, family physician) if:** vomiting or diarrhea for more than six hours; shortness of breath; a fever that won't go away after a couple of days; and inability to keep food or liquid down.
- If you end up at the emergency room, it is vital that you mention that you or your loved one has T1D, and have an ID bracelet prominently displayed.

Supply Chain

Is COVID-19 disrupting the T1D supply chain?

At this time, we have received no notifications that there are or have been disruptions in the T1D supply chain.

Additional Information

For detailed information about COVID-19, visit the CDC and WHO.

Travel Concerns? CDC provides recommendations on [postponing or canceling travel](#).