

## COVID-19 and diabetes

### Information for families of children and adolescents with type 1 diabetes

In the current global situation concerning coronavirus COVID-19, we understand many families have questions about the risk to children with diabetes. Although information on the risk of contracting the virus for children with type 1 diabetes is limited we believe the risk is similar to the rest of the general population. In Australia, the people most at risk of getting the virus are those who have recently travelled overseas, or been in contact with someone who has the illness.

Children with type 1 diabetes are not believed to be any more immunocompromised than children without diabetes. There have been some messages in the media that people with diabetes are more susceptible to COVID-19. This is more relevant to older people with both type 1 and type 2 diabetes and not children.

However, as with any generalised illness in children with type 1 diabetes fluctuations in blood glucose levels can result. As usual, if your child with diabetes becomes unwell the sick day management plan, that includes regular monitoring of glucose levels, ketones and insulin dose adjustments, should be followed. You should also seek medical review for any illness, based on the government recommendations for illnesses with fevers or respiratory symptoms.

There continues to be no evidence that parents of children with diabetes should consider things differently to other families in regard to COVID-19. Standard precautions as for any respiratory illness are recommended. This includes taking extra care with frequent hand washing with soap and water or an alcohol based hand rub, covering coughs and sneezes and avoiding contact with anyone with flu like symptoms.

[https://www.rch.org.au/rch/Coronavirus\\_\(COVID-19\)/](https://www.rch.org.au/rch/Coronavirus_(COVID-19)/)

Currently the recommendation from the Victorian Department of Education and Training is for there to be a staggered return to school. Students in Prep – Grade 2, Year 11 and 12 and all students in specialist schools, will return to school on Tuesday 26 May 2020. Students in Grade 3 – Year 10 will continue to learn from home, until they return to school on Tuesday 9 June 2020. Once each year level returns to on-site schooling, schools will no longer offer a remote learning program for those students. If parents choose to keep their child at home, they will be responsible for maintaining student learning. This does not apply to children who need to be absent for health or medical reasons, such as children with a compromised immune system. For those families, schools will establish a plan to meet their circumstances.

[https://education.vic.gov.au/parents/Pages/stagedreturn\\_overview.aspx](https://education.vic.gov.au/parents/Pages/stagedreturn_overview.aspx)

We recognise that families and children may be feeling stressed and anxious. We also recognise that the situation is changing rapidly and that recommendations are also changing. We will endeavour to deal with all queries as efficiently as we can and in a respectful manner. We also expect that families will interact with our staff in a respectful manner

<https://www.rch.org.au/your-rights/>.



The situation regarding COVID-19 is evolving and changing rapidly, so our understanding of the risks in relation to diabetes in children may change. Please keep up to date by accessing the Victorian Government Department of Health and Human Services website at <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus>

For more health related information on COVID–19 please visit the Victorian Government Department of Health and Human Services website at <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus>

If you are planning to travel, please follow the travel health advice from the Australian government at <https://www.smartraveller.gov.au/>

For concerns regarding availabilities of insulin and other essential medicines and their National Diabetes Services Scheme (NDSS) products and supply, please refer to the Diabetes Australia Statement at: <https://www.diabetesaustralia.com.au/news/15723?type=articles>