

# A guide to managing children's diabetes during COVID-19

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(HealthDay)—Parents worry that COVID-19 can make a diabetic child's

condition worse, but an expert has some tips for keeping kids healthy during the pandemic.

"If a child has good control of their diabetes, it does not seem as though there will be severe effects if they were to get the virus," said Dr. Michael Yafi, an associate professor of pediatric endocrinology at McGovern Medical School at University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston.

"However, children with poorly controlled diabetes are at a high risk of becoming severely ill if they were to get the virus," Yafi said in a university news release.

High blood sugar levels can weaken the [immune system](#), making it harder for people with diabetes to fend off infections like COVID-19, he explained.

"The exact cause of severe outcomes in patients with diabetes and COVID-19 is not yet known, but research suggests that people who have diabetes have weakened immune systems, which can impact their ability to quickly heal from an [infection](#) or disease," Yafi said.

He offered these tips to parents to help reduce their child's risk:

- Be sure kids wash their hands often.
- Tell them it's important to avoid touching their face.
- Stay away from large gatherings and maintain social distancing.
- Clean commonly used areas around the house often.
- Keep a record of a child's blood sugar levels.
- Keep extra emergency diabetes supplies on hand.
- Practice [healthy habits](#) and feed children a [healthy diet](#).
- Make sure kids get some exercise every day.

Because COVID-19 affects the body in many ways, there are concerns that it may cause patients to develop diabetes, Yafi said. "However, that is still to be determined because we do not have any global epidemiological information about the association between [diabetes](#) and previous COVID-19 infection," he added.

**More information:** Learn more about type 1 diabetes from the [U.S. National Institutes of Health](#).

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