

Pediatric diabetes: age related responsibilities and traits

	Non Diabetes Related	Diabetes Related
Age below 3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing gross motor skills. • Developing speech skills. • Learning to trust. • Responding to love. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents must do all care. • Acceptance of diabetes care as part of normal life. • Often give shots after seeing what is eaten.
Age 3 - 7 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full of imagination/ concrete thinkers. • Cannot think abstractly. • Self-centered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent does all tasks. • Slowly learns to cooperate for blood sugar tests and insulin shots. • Varies with food choices • Slowly learns to recognize hypoglycemia • Undeveloped thought process of time • Adult needs to do all insulin pump management
Age 8 - 12 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concrete thinkers. • More logical and understanding. • More curious. • More social. • More responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can learn to test blood sugars. • At age 10 or 11, can draw up and give shots on occasion, although they still need supervision. • Can make own food choices; can learn initial carb-counting. • Does not fully understand that doing something now (i.e. good diabetes control) helps to prevent later problems (i.e., diabetes complications).

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	Non Diabetes Related	Diabetes Related
Age 8 - 12 years (Continued)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can recognize and treat hypoglycemia. • By 11 or 12 years, can be responsible for remembering snacks, but may still need help of alarm watches or parent reminders. • Can do own insulin pump and injections with parent supervision and confirmation of doses.
Age 13 - 18 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More independent. • Behavior varies. • Body image important. • Away from home more. • More responsible. • Able to think about ideas and possibilities. • Able to understand the importance of doing something now to prevent problems in the future. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capable of doing most injections and tests, but still needs parental involvement and review to make decisions about dosage. • Knows which foods to eat; can do carbohydrate counting. • Slowly recognizes the importance of good sugar control to prevent later medical complications. • May be more willing to inject many shots per day. • Is appropriate for parents to take over responsibility of care if patient is struggling with burn out or managing on their own.

This handout does not take the place of a discussion with your health care team. Discuss any questions or concerns you may have with your health care team.