

Diabetes Management Skills & Development

Every child is different, but you can generally expect children at certain developmental milestones to be able to manage certain diabetes task independently. The following is a guideline for what tasks your student should be able to independently manage at each stage of development.

Developmental Stage	General Tasks	Blood Sugar Monitoring	Insulin Administration	Insulin Pump
Pre-School (>5 yrs)	Unable to perform most task independently. Significant behavior changes with HIGHS and LOWS	Performed by an adult, child may assist	Performed by an adult, child should be able to cooperate and choose sites	Performed by an adult
Elementary School (5-10 yrs)	Cooperates in all tasks at school	By age 8 most can check blood sugar with supervision, may need more assistance if HIGH or LOW symptoms are present	By age 8-10, children begin to learn the steps of insulin administration	Begin by programming boluses with supervision. Begin to understand the carb content of foods.
Middle School – Jr. High (11-14 yrs)	Become more independent with diabetes tasks.	May perform blood sugar checks without supervision unless symptomatic.	By age 12, most can administer their own insulin with supervision.	Calculate and administer blouses with supervision. Able to troubleshoot. Many can do their own set insertions. Increasing carb counting competency.
High School (15-18 yrs)	Becoming very independent. If school performance and diabetes management are satisfactory, little supervision is necessary.	May do without supervision, unless symptomatic, or is management or school performance is questionable.	Can administer without supervision unless problem arise.	Calculate and administer boluses, do own set insertins, tubing changes. Needs assistance only when symptomatic.