

Children, teens with type 1 diabetes had better glucose control during COVID-19 lockdown

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Blood glucose levels improved among children and teens with type 1 diabetes during the first 12 weeks of COVID-19 lockdown in the United Kingdom, according to a study presented virtually at ENDO 2021, the Endocrine Society's annual meeting.

"The findings demonstrate the difficulties faced by patients and families managing type 1 [diabetes](#) around school pressures, meals away from home, [social life](#) and [peer pressure](#)," said lead researcher Neil Lawrence, M.B.Ch.B., of Sheffield Children's Hospital NHS Foundation Trust in Sheffield, United Kingdom. "Children and families found it easier to manage this disease when they were forced to stay at home. This helps us to understand the pressure that is put on patients and families when trying to live normal busy lives with activities outside of the home. We need to give them extra support at school and when they go out socializing to prevent them from developing unfortunate complications in later life."

U.K. hospitals had to implement many changes in care for individuals with diabetes and other chronic diseases during the global pandemic. The researchers wanted to know if these changes were detrimental to the care of children and adolescents with type 1 diabetes. Some clinicians and families were concerned that remote consultations would result in poorer care.

To investigate this question, the researchers looked at how well 180 children and teens in two U.K. communities controlled their type 1 diabetes in the 12 weeks before the COVID-19 national lockdown was

announced on March 23, 2020, compared with the 12 weeks after the lockdown was put in place.

They found a significant improvement in [blood](#) glucose measurements in the 12 weeks after the lockdown compared with the 12 weeks before the [lockdown](#). The average blood sugar dropped, long-term blood sugar measurement (HbA1c) dropped, and blood sugar readings showed less variability and a greater time in the range of blood sugar that the researchers asked them to aim for (3.9 to 10mmol/L).

"Managing type 1 diabetes around school, socializing and extra-curricular activities is really challenging, and [children](#) with this disease need parents, teachers and other caregivers to communicate well and work as a team to prevent long-term health complications that are caused by poor blood glucose control," Lawrence said. "This gives us important insights into where advice, education and support should be directed, as well as encouraging the use of remote video and phone consultations going forward. These approaches can be beneficial both for families and for clinicians."

Provided by The Endocrine Society

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