

Managing chronic health issues at school: for families



Does your child have a chronic health issue such as asthma, diabetes or allergies, or are they dealing with a developmental disability such as ADHD or autism? Families, caregivers, schools and health-care providers can work together to keep students healthy and attending school regularly.



What you can do at home

- **Build healthy habits!** Eat healthy meals and snacks.
- **Get active every day**—walk, play, move!
- **Stick to routines** for sleep, schoolwork, and medications.
- **Talk with your child** about how they are feeling at school. Can they talk with supportive adults, including the school nurse, who can help them manage their health conditions?
- **Attend annual check-ups.** Update the health-care provider on challenges.



Working with your child's school

- At the start of each school year, make sure to **complete all school health forms** to help ensure the school is aware of your child's health condition.
- **If your child has prolonged absences**, work with your child's teacher or school to co-create a Return to Learn plan for during and after the absence with options for gradual return and completing work remotely.
- **Your child may qualify for extra help** through a 504 Plan (such as extra time on tests) or individualized education plan (IEP) if they need additional support for a disability. The school's student support team (social worker, school nurse or an administrator) can help you get started.
- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires schools to **provide children with disabilities appropriate supports** and services. If you think your child is in need of these supports and services, talk with the school team.
- If your child participates in an **after-school activity**, work with your school to ensure that appropriate health supports are in place.
- If you don't have **access to health services or health insurance**, contact your school to see what resources might be available.



Partnering with the health-care provider

- Health-care providers are available **to answer your** questions or concerns about your child's health.
- If your child's chronic health issue is **causing them to miss school**, contact your child's health-care provider.
- Talk with your health-care provider and school staff about how to **manage your child's medications**, including refills, dosing, distribution and storage. Complete appropriate forms.
- Ask your health-care provider to develop a **health plan specific to your child's chronic health condition** (i.e., asthma action plan, seizure action plan) to share with school.
- **Use your doctor's knowledge** to tell the school about your child's health needs. This helps the school make the best educational plan and accommodations. Make sure to share the plan with your child's health-care provider before finalizing it with the school.

Helpful resources

- [Tips for Staying Healthy, Attendance Works](#)
- [Five Tips to Get Teens Talking](#), Center for Parent & Teen Communication
- [Managing chronic diseases at school](#), Children's Health

