

# KOVLER CONNECTION

AT THE  
FOREFRONT  
OF DIABETES  
RESEARCH  
AND CARE.

SPRING 2020

## A LETTER FROM KOVLER DIABETES CENTER DIRECTOR DR. LOU PHILIPSON

### DEAR MEMBER OF THE KOVLER DIABETES CENTER COMMUNITY,

I write today at the height of the battle against the COVID-19 national emergency. We at the Kovler Diabetes Center know that many of you with diabetes mellitus have questions and concerns. As your partners in achieving and maintaining your health and wellness goals, we are here to address them.

You have no doubt seen references to diabetes as a risk factor in COVID-19. The risk is not of contracting the disease; people with diabetes seem to be at no greater risk of getting COVID-19 than those without diabetes. However, if people with diabetes do become ill from the coronavirus, they are at higher risk of getting very sick.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) urges that people in high-risk groups use extra vigilance in adhering to its guidelines to reduce the risk of getting the disease. Please follow its advice regarding hand-washing, avoiding contact with people who are sick, avoiding touching your face, disinfecting frequently-touched objects and surfaces, working from home, and observing social distancing.

The CDC now recommends that everyone wear cloth face coverings in public settings to help prevent spread of the virus by people who are infected but are not exhibiting symptoms. There are many websites giving instructions on DIY masks, and a simple face cover can be made without sewing, as shown in this CDC how-to video: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html).

We also suggest that you follow the recommendations of the American Diabetes Association and JDRF recommendations regarding preparation. Stock your home with diabetes medical supplies, medications, and carbohydrates sufficient for at least 14 days—preferably 30 days, now that the shelter-in-place order has been extended to April 30. If you take insulin, a three-month prescription with three renewals has become standard.

Remember that if you do contract COVID-19, you may need to monitor your blood glucose levels more often than usual. Indeed, because this disease has been found to significantly depress appetite in some patients, glucose monitoring alone will not be reliable. You will also have to check ketones.

For those with type 1 diabetes, we recommend sick-day precautions with glucose and ketone monitoring more often than usual. The Kovler Diabetes Center has complete sick day guidelines.

For the time being, we are minimizing clinic appointments as much as possible by scheduling virtual visits using services like Zoom or checking in with folks by phone. Please use MyChart to contact us if you would like to speak with a doctor, nurse, or diabetes educator.

Finally, if you are ill, please remember to contact the team helping to manage your diabetes and let us know.

We are honored to be your health care partners and providers, and committed to continuing providing superlative care even under these difficult circumstances.

Wishing you safety and good health in these challenging times,

Lou Philipson, MD, PhD  
DIRECTOR, KOVLER DIABETES CENTER



THE ADA WEBSITE HAS A COVID-19 INFORMATION HUB WITH EXTENSIVE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.



## RESOURCES

UCHICAGO MEDICINE COVID-19 RESPONSE FUNDS:  
[giving.uchicago.edu/covid](http://giving.uchicago.edu/covid)

ADA'S COVID-19 INFORMATION HUB:  
[diabetes.org/coronavirus-covid-19](http://diabetes.org/coronavirus-covid-19)

SICK DAY GUIDELINES FOR CHILDREN:  
[kovlerdiabetescenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/11UofC\\_Kovler\\_Sick-Day-Guidelines.W.pdf](http://kovlerdiabetescenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/11UofC_Kovler_Sick-Day-Guidelines.W.pdf)