



June 25, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

We are all aware that COVID-19 is a serious health threat, and the situation is evolving daily. The level of risk varies between and within communities and individuals. We now know that many people with diabetes are at higher risk for COVID-19 infection, and therefore Diabetes Canada encourages employers to make reasonable accommodations for the concerns of employees living with diabetes.

Many people who live with diabetes are at greater risk of developing a more severe form of the disease once infected.¹ They are more likely to require hospitalization and there is a two-fold increase in incidence of patients with diabetes requiring intensive care for COVID-19.² These risks are greater if their blood sugar is not in target range a majority of the time, if they have complications of diabetes and if they have other conditions. Experts believe that this is due to impaired immune function.

A health care provider is best positioned to determine an individual's risk.

With the advice of their health care provider, some individuals with diabetes may request a modification of their work arrangements to reduce the likelihood of COVID-19 infection. Diabetes Canada encourages employers to recognize the additional risk that their employees with diabetes may be facing and to make all reasonable efforts to offer these employees accommodations during COVID-19.

Sincerely,

Dr. Seema Nagpal
Vice-President, Science & Policy
Diabetes Canada

¹ <https://www.touchendocrinology.com/insight/covid-19-infection-in-people-with-diabetes/>

² Li B, Yang J, Zhao F, et al. Prevalence and impact of cardiovascular metabolic diseases on COVID-19 in China. *Clin Res Cardiol.* 2020; doi: 10.1007/s00392-020-01626-9.

