

# Diabetic ketoacidosis

Also called: DKA, diabetic acidosis

A serious diabetes complication where the body produces excess blood acids (ketones).

## Common

More than 200,000 US cases per year

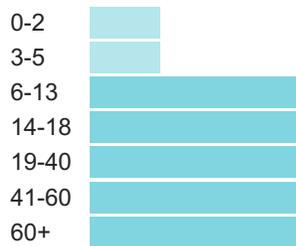
-  Requires a medical diagnosis
-  Lab tests or imaging always required
-  Treatable by a medical professional
-  Short-term: resolves within days to weeks

This condition occurs when there isn't enough insulin in the body. It can be triggered by infection or other illness.

Symptoms include thirst, frequent urination, nausea, abdominal pain, weakness, fruity-scented breath, and confusion.

Hospital treatment to replace fluids and electrolytes and provide insulin therapy may be needed.

## Ages affected



## Symptoms

### Requires a medical diagnosis

Symptoms include thirst, frequent urination, nausea, abdominal pain, weakness, fruity-scented breath, and confusion.

**People may experience:**

**Pain areas:** in the abdomen

**Whole body:** dehydration, excessive thirst, fatigue, loss of appetite, or malaise

**Gastrointestinal:** nausea or vomiting

**Mouth:** dryness or fruity-scented breath

**Respiratory:** rapid breathing or shortness of breath

**Urinary:** excessive urination or frequent urination

**Also common:** blurred vision, mental confusion, sleepiness, weakness, or weight loss

**Treatments****Treatment consists of fluids**

Hospital treatment to replace fluids and electrolytes and provide insulin therapy may be needed.

**Supportive care**

**Fluid replacement:** Supplies or replenishes water and nutrients in the body.

**Cardiac monitoring:** Using an electronic device to monitor heart rate and rhythm. Can be done in the hospital or at home.

**Medications**

**Insulin:** Helps control the amount of sugar (glucose) in the bloodstream.

- Insulin detemir (Levemir and Levemir FlexTouch)
- Insulin aspart (NovoLog, Novolog Flexpen, and Novolog PenFill)
- Insulin lispro (Humalog and Humalog KwikPen)
- Insulin glargine (Lantus, Lantus Solostar, and Toujeo SoloStar)

**Dietary supplement:** Works alone or in conjunction with other treatments to promote health.

- Potassium

**Specialists**

**Critical care doctor:** Monitors and treats those in intensive care.

**Endocrinologist:** Treats metabolic and hormone disorders.

**Pediatrician:** Provides medical care for infants, children, and teenagers.

**Primary care provider (PCP):** Prevents, diagnoses, and treats diseases.

**Emergency medicine doctor:** Treats patients in the emergency department.

**Critical:** consult a doctor for medical advice

Note: The information you see describes what usually happens with a medical condition, but doesn't apply to everyone. This information isn't medical advice, so make sure to contact a healthcare provider if you have a medical problem. If you think you may have a medical emergency, call your doctor or a emergency number immediately.

**Sources:** Mayo Clinic and others. Learn more