DIABETES IN CHILDREN

WHAT IS DIABETES?
1. Your body is made up of tiny cells.
2. These cells need energy to work.
3. When you eat, your body will turn food into a type of sugar called glucose for energy.
4. Your pancreas makes a chemical called insulin.
5. Insulin helps the glucose get into the cells to give you energy.
6. When there is not enough insulin or your body cannot make insulin.
7. Your blood sugar level becomes too high and this means you have Type 1 Diabetes Mellitus.

WHO GETS TYPE 1 DIABETES?
Although it can happen to anyone at any age, it is more common among children and young people.

WHAT IS BLOOD SUGAR LEVEL?
It is the amount of sugar (glucose) in the blood. It is important to keep your blood sugar level within the range instructed by your doctor.

WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR BODY WHEN YOUR BLOOD SUGAR LEVEL GOES DOWN (HYPOGLYCEMIA)?
If you do not eat enough, or exercise or have too much insulin in your body, your blood sugar level may go down. This is called hypoglycemia. When this happens you might feel:

- Shaky
- Dizzy and cannot concentrate well
- Weak or tired
- Hungry or nauseated

WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR BODY WHEN YOUR BLOOD SUGAR LEVEL GOES UP (HYPERGLYCEMIA)?
If you forgot to take your insulin or had a lot of sugary food/drinks or you are under stress or sick, your blood sugar level goes up. This is called hyperglycemia. When this happens you might feel:

- Thirsty
- The need to pee a lot
- Angry
- Pain in the stomach

HOW CAN I MANAGE MY DIABETES?
1. Take your insulin every day using insulin injection or insulin pump.
2. Always check your blood sugar level by using glucometer or glucose sensor to help you and your doctor to better manage diabetes:
   - When you wake up
   - Before each meal or snack
   - Before bedtime
   - 2-3 hours after meals
3. Learn more about diabetes so you can better manage it and handle it as part of everyday life.
4. Know the signs and symptoms of low blood sugar (hypoglycemia) & high blood sugar (hyperglycemia).
5. Follow your doctor’s advice to stay healthy.
6. Speak to your dietitian to plan meals, learn about calorie counting and reading food labels.
7. Plan daily activity by choosing the exercise or sport you like and follow your doctor’s instructions.

WHAT IS THE ABC OF DIABETES?
A - HbA1c
HbA1c is a blood test that shows what your average blood sugar level was for the past 3 months. To manage diabetes, it is important to do this test regularly.

B - Blood sugar
It is important to check your blood sugar level at least 4 times during the day.

C - Control
It is important to manage your diabetes with diet, exercise and insulin.