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The Relationship between Parent-Reported Social Support and Adherence to Medical Treatment in Families of Adolescents with Type 1 Diabetes

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▶ Abstract

Objective To investigate the relationships between both mother-reported spousal support and social network support, and mother-adolescent diabetes-related conflict, discrepancies in decision-making autonomy (DDMA), and adolescent adherence to diabetes treatment. **Method** Fifty-one mothers of adolescents with IDDM completed self-report measures of social support, diabetes-related conflict, and adolescent autonomy for diabetes care. Analyses tested conflict and DDMA as mediators between mother-reported social support and adolescent adherence to treatment. **Results** Increased levels of mother-adolescent conflict were associated with poorer treatment adherence and both mother-reported diabetes-related conflict and DDMA predicted adolescents' glycemic control. Higher levels of mother-reported spousal


support were associated with less conflict and greater adherence to treatment. Sobel's test indicated a statistical trend for conflict as a mediator between spousal support and adolescent treatment adherence ($p < .07$). DDMA did not predict mother-adolescent conflict and did not emerge as a mediator between mother-reported social support and adolescent adherence. **Conclusions** This study highlights the role of spousal support for mothers of adolescents with IDDM and indicates that the level of spousal support mothers receive may play an important role in the health care behaviors of their adolescents.

Key words: adherence; conflict; social support.

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