

DIABETES IN CHILDREN



TYPE 1 DIABETES (T1D)

TYPE 2 DIABETES (T2D)

What is T1D and T2D?

In T1D, your child's body attacks cells in the pancreas and prevents it from making insulin.

In T2D, your child can produce insulin, but their body is unable to use it effectively.

Cause

T1D is an autoimmune condition which means the body attacks itself by preventing the production of insulin. The exact reason why this develops is unknown.

T2D is a chronic disease, which can be prevented. Factors such as pediatric obesity, poor nutrition, lack of exercise, or family health history can increase the risk for developing T2D.

Symptoms

First signs of T1D may be similar to other conditions. Common symptoms include: increased thirst, frequent urination, unintentional weight loss, fatigue, irritability, and sweet-smelling breath.

Some children with T2D may have no or very few symptoms. Noticeable symptoms are increased hunger, blurred vision, or patches of dark, velvety skin between the fingers or toes, as well as the back of the neck.

Diagnosis

Random blood sugar test
Fasting blood sugar test
A1C test
Diabetes antibody tests

Random blood sugar test
Fasting blood sugar test
A1C test
Oral glucose tolerance test

Potential Complications

If left untreated, your child may experience damage to their kidneys, heart and blood vessels, eyes, and nerves. Keeping your child's blood sugar in the target range can help reduce the risk of complications.

Managing blood glucose is the best way to prevent complications. Common complications include high blood pressure, heart disease, and high cholesterol.

Treatment Options

Your child can take insulin to treat T1D. Be sure to frequently monitor your child's blood sugar levels with glucose meters, keeping track of their carbohydrate intake, and adjusting insulin doses based on their diet, activities, and illness.

You may be able to help your child treat T2D with only exercise and diet. Your child may also need to take medication to control blood sugar levels. A health care provider will be able to give you the best treatment options for your child.

Supporting Your Child

Educate family members about T1D and to create a support system for your child. This includes understanding how to check and read their blood sugar levels, how to count insulin doses, and how to treat low blood sugar.

Family support is a critical factor to your child, encourage them talk freely about concerns, follow a meal plan, exercise often, and take medications as prescribed.

Patients Have Questions. We Have Answers.

The Hormone Health Network is your trusted source for endocrine patient education. Our free, online resources are available at hormone.org.

Reviewers: Ana Creo, MD *Mayo Clinic*; Natalia Genere, MD *Mayo Clinic*