



# Grandparents Corner

*November 2018*

*National Diabetes Month*

November is National Diabetes Month. Let's learn more about Type 1 diabetes in children.

Every parent knows babies and small children sleep and drink a lot. But if your child is suddenly much drowsier or thirstier than usual, it could be a symptom of type 1 diabetes.

It used to be called juvenile diabetes because most of the people who got it were young children. Your child could get type 1 diabetes as an infant, or later, as a toddler or a teen. Most often, it appears after age 5. But some people don't get it until their late 30s.

Know the symptoms of type 1 diabetes so you can help keep your child healthy.

## Understanding Type 1 Diabetes

It's not the same as "classic" or type 2 diabetes, which is often linked to obesity and seen in adults (but it can occur in children too, usually after age 10).

If your child has type 1 diabetes, it means her pancreas -- an organ in the upper-right side of the belly -- makes little or no insulin. The condition is an autoimmune disorder, which means it happens when the body's defense system attacks and destroys cells that make insulin.

## What to Watch For

Symptoms of type 1 diabetes in infants and children can start very suddenly. Keep an eye out for these signs in your baby or child:

- Sudden strange behavior (acting "drunk")
- Breath that smells fruity, sweet, or like wine
- Extreme drowsiness or lack of energy
- Ongoing, intense thirst
- Grunting while breathing
- Heavy breathing
- Huge appetite
- Sudden vision changes
- Sudden weight loss
- Peeing more often (infants and toddlers may have more wet diapers than usual)
- Difficulty breathing

## When to Call a Doctor

Type 1 diabetes may cause sudden, extreme swings in blood sugar that can be dangerous. If you notice any of the symptoms of diabetes in your child, it's important to get her a physical exam as soon as possible, so her doctor can begin treatment right away.

The doctor will do a simple urine test to check for glucose (sugar) in the urine. A more involved test, called an oral glucose tolerance test, can tell for certain if it's type 1 diabetes. Your child will need to follow a special diet before this procedure.

If your child has already been diagnosed with type 1 diabetes, call your doctor if you notice any of these signs of a low blood sugar emergency:

- Blurry or double vision
- Cold, clammy skin
- Confusion
- Dizziness
- Drowsiness or tiredness
- Extreme or sudden hunger
- Headache
- Pale, moist skin
- Rapid pulse
- Shallow breathing
- Sweating
- Weakness

Low blood sugar can be life-threatening to children with type 1 diabetes. Always call 911 or get emergency medical help if your child ever passes out or has seizures.

Source: WebMD - <https://www.webmd.com/diabetes/might-my-child-have-type-1-diabetes>

*When it comes to nutrition, the elderly are an especially vulnerable population. Malnutrition in the elderly does not discriminate between race, gender or socioeconomic status. All elderly people can be at risk of declining nutrition. Read the issue and answer True or False to the questions below.*

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1. Be aware that people who pace a great deal use lots of calories and may need to have several snacks during the day to keep their weight up. T F
2. Older adults are not more susceptible to malnutrition. T F
3. If left to choose food on their own, people with Alzheimer's will always make good food choices. T F
4. If a person is fed while not sitting up, they can choke. T F
5. Avoid buying any products with sugar added – cereals, desserts, juices, etc. They are expensive and add empty calories. T F
6. Sometimes, toward the end of the middle stage, people enjoy being fed even though they may still be able to feed themselves. T F
7. If the person wants to eat with their fingers, discourage it so that they learn how to use utensils properly. T F
8. Poor dental health can lead to malnutrition. T F
9. A four ounce serving of protein at a meal is about the size of a deck of cards. T F
10. Since people with Alzheimer's are easily distracted, if necessary, face their chair away from distractions such as a TV. T F

**KEY:** 1. T 2. F 3. F 4. T 5. T 6. T 7. F 8. T 9. T 10. T