

T1D Parent/Caregiver Q&A

What is Type 1 Diabetes?

TYPICAL

- In the human body, there is an organ called the pancreas.
- The pancreas makes insulin.
- When you eat, your body digests some foods to make glucose (sugar) that is carried in your blood.
- Blood glucose is used by your body's cells as energy.
- Insulin moves the glucose from your blood into the cells.

TYPE 1

In type 1 diabetes, the pancreas does not make enough insulin. This can cause high levels of glucose in the blood.

- High levels of glucose in the blood is called "hyperglycemia."
- Hyperglycemia over long periods of time can damage the body. This can cause symptoms and complications.

What is the difference between Type 1 and Type 2 Diabetes?

There are different types of diabetes and the most commonly known are Type 1 and Type 2. Both affect how the body controls blood sugar, but they are not the same condition. Type 1 the body stops making insulin and to treat the individuals have to take insulin everyday. Type 2 the body still makes insulin but it doesn't use it well. They have different causes and treatments.

What causes T1D?

Type 1 diabetes is caused by the immune system attacking insulin-making cells. It is not preventable and not caused by lifestyle choices. Family history and other factors may play a role, but the exact cause of the body attacking these cells is not fully known.

What are the warning signs and symptoms of Type 1 diabetes?



Increase in thirst.



Unexplained weight loss.



Itchy or Dry Skin.



Vomiting.



Increase in urination.



Feeling very tired.



Fruity breath.



Stomach pain.



Bed wetting in children who did not do that before.



Blurry vision.



Dry or flushed skin.



Trouble breathing.



Increase in hunger, even after eating.



Dry Mouth.



Feeling sick to stomach.



Confusion.

When are most people diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes?

A T1D diagnosis can happen suddenly and unexpectedly. T1D develops in three stages. Talk to your healthcare provider if you think your child may have symptoms of T1D. A variety of tests may be performed to confirm the diagnosis. Blood sugar levels are measured and, if elevated, may require insulin injections.

T1D Screening Parent/Caregiver Q&A

Who is at risk for T1D?

T1D can affect people of all ages. The biggest risk factor is family history. If a close family member has T1D, your risk is 15 times higher. However, most people diagnosed with T1D do not have a family history. While those with a family history of T1D present a greater risk for developing the disease, approximately 90% of people diagnosed with T1D have no family history at all.¹



Why get screened for T1D?

While T1D cannot be prevented, early detection through autoantibody screening can help individuals to:

- Reduce risk of life-threatening complications and hospitalization
- Better plan for and manage potential diagnosis
- Potentially participate in research trials to advance management of the disease

Screening can also significantly reduce the incidence of diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA), a serious complication of T1D, among those newly diagnosed.

Where can I get screened?

There are several screening options – all done through a blood test to identify diabetes-related autoantibodies:

- **Commercial Labs:** Local commercial lab, such as LabCorp or Quest Diagnostics²
- **TrialNet:** TrialNet location, event or health fair – or test kit to use at home and bring to commercial labs (at no cost to relatives of people with T1D)²
- **Autoimmunity Screening for Kids (ASK):** Free screening available to U.S. residents aged 1+ with or without a family history of T1D – through Barbara Davis Center for Diabetes and at-home screening kits^{3,4}

**This list is not complete. The organizations listed are examples and are not officially endorsed.*

What do my child's test results mean?

NEGATIVE (0-1 autoantibodies): If your child is under the age of 15, you may consider having them rescreened every year.

POSTIVE (2 or more autoantibodies): Talk to your child's healthcare provider about confirmatory testing, establishing a monitoring plan, and options for management.

How can I best manage a T1D diagnosis?

T1D can be effectively managed with the right tools and resources. If your child is newly diagnosed with T1D, talk to your healthcare provider about developing a monitoring and management plan. The plan should then be shared with your child's school nurse.

1. Sims, E.K., Besser, R.E.J., Dayan, C., Rasmussen, C.G., Greenbaum, C., Griffin, K.J., Hagopian, W., Knip, M., Long, A.E., Martin, F., Mathieu, C., Rewers, M., Steck, A.K., Wentworth, J.M., Rich, S.S., Kordonouri, O., Ziegler, A.-G., Herold, K.C. (2022). Screening for Type 1 Diabetes in the General Population: A Status Report and Perspective. *Diabetes* 71 (4): pp. 610–623. <https://doi.org/10.2337/db20-0054>

2. Scheiner, G., Weiner, S.M., Kruger, D.F., & Pettus, J.H. (2022). Screening for Type 1 Diabetes: Role of the Diabetes Care and Education Specialist. *ADCES in Practice*, 10, 20 - 25.

3. Barbara Davis Center for Diabetes (n.d.). Autoimmunity Screening for Kids: Screening Locations. <https://www.askhealth.org/locations>

4. McQueen, R.B., Rasmussen, C.G., Waugh, K., Frohnert, B.I., Steck, A.K., Yu, L., Baxter, J., Rewers, M. (2020). Cost and Cost-effectiveness of Large-scale Screening for Type 1 Diabetes in Colorado. *Diabetes Care* 43 (7): pp. 1496–1503. <https://doi.org/10.2337/dc19-2003>

Online Resources for Parents/Caregivers

The Type 1 diabetes (T1D) community includes families and organizations across the United States. They work to educate and support people living with T1D.

The resources below come from trusted T1D advocacy and support groups. They offer clear, reliable information to help you learn more about Type 1 diabetes, understand screening and its benefits, explore screening options and find guidance on managing a new T1D diagnosis.

- [Type 1 Diabetes \(ADA\)](#)
- [For Caregivers \(ADA\)](#)
- [Diabetes Management \(Beyond Type 1\)](#)
- [ADA Safe at School](#)
- [DiaTribe Type 1 Diabetes](#)
- [T1D 101 \(Breakthrough T1D\)](#)
- [Early Diabetes Screening & Detection \(Breakthrough T1D\)](#)
- [TrailNet.org](#)

