

Type 1 Diabetes

Type 1 Diabetes is a chronic condition that affects the insulin making cells of the pancreas. It's estimated that about 1.25 million Americans live with it. People with Type 1 Diabetes don't make enough insulin, an important hormone produced by the pancreas. Insulin allows your cells to store sugar or glucose and fat and produce energy. Unfortunately, there is no known cure, but treatment can prevent complications and also improve everyday life for patients with Type 1 Diabetes. Lots of people with Type 1 Diabetes live a full life. The more we learn and develop treatment for the disorder, the better the outcome.

Causes

The exact cause of Type 1 Diabetes is unknown. Usually, the body's own immune system — which normally fights harmful bacteria and viruses — destroys the insulin-producing (islet) cells in the pancreas. Other possible causes include:

- Genetics
- Exposure to viruses and other environmental factors

Symptoms

Type 1 Diabetes symptoms can appear suddenly and may include:

- Feeling more thirsty than usual
- Frequent urination
- Bed-wetting in children who have never wet the bed during the night
- Feeling very hungry
- Losing weight without trying
- Feeling irritable or having other mood changes
- Feeling tired and weak
- Having blurry vision

When to see a doctor?

Talk to a healthcare provider if you notice any of the above symptoms in your child.

- [Type 1 Diabetes Parent Fact Sheet](#)
- [Type 1 Diabetes Parent Fact Sheet - Spanish](#)

References: Mayo Clinic, 2024; Pennsylvania Department of Health