



## Type 1 Diabetes Information

This type 1 diabetes information was developed pursuant to the Pennsylvania School Code (24 P.S. § 1414.12) and is for school entities and nonpublic schools to provide to parents and guardians of incoming elementary school students and students entering grade six, beginning with the 2025-2026 School Year.

Type 1 diabetes in children is an autoimmune disease that can be fatal if untreated, and the guidance provided in this information sheet is intended to raise awareness about this disease.

### Description

#### **Type 1 diabetes usually develops in children and young adults but can occur at any age**

- Type 1 diabetes can appear at any age, but it generally appears at two noticeable peaks. The first peak occurs in children between 4 and 7 years old. The second is in children between 10 and 14 years old ([Mayo Clinic](#)).

#### **Type 1 diabetes affects insulin production**

- Normally the body turns the carbohydrates in food into glucose (blood sugar), the basic fuel for the body's cells.
- The pancreas makes insulin, a hormone that moves glucose from the blood into the cells.
- In type 1 diabetes, the body's pancreas stops making insulin, and blood glucose levels rise.
- Over time, glucose can reach dangerously high levels in the blood, which is called hyperglycemia.
- Untreated hyperglycemia can result in diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA), which is a life-threatening complication of diabetes.

### Risk Factors Associated with Type 1 Diabetes

It is recommended that children displaying warning signs and symptoms associated with type 1 diabetes described below, should be screened (tested) for the disease by their health care provider.

#### **Risk Factors**

Researchers do not completely understand why some people develop type 1 diabetes and others do not. However, having a family history of type 1 diabetes can increase the likelihood of developing type 1 diabetes. Other factors might play a role in developing type 1 diabetes, including environmental triggers such as viruses. Type 1 diabetes is not caused by diet or lifestyle choices.

#### **Warning Signs and Symptoms Associated with Type 1 Diabetes and Diabetic Ketoacidosis**

Warning signs and symptoms of type 1 diabetes in children develop quickly, in a few weeks or months, and can be severe. If your child displays the warning signs below, contact your child's



primary health care provider or pediatrician for a consultation to determine if screening your child for type 1 diabetes is appropriate:

- Increased thirst
- Increased urination, including bed-wetting after toilet training
- Increased hunger, even after eating
- Unexplained weight loss
- Feeling very tired
- Blurred vision
- Very dry skin
- Slow healing of sores or cuts
- Moodiness, restlessness, irritability, or behavior changes

DKA is a complication of untreated type 1 diabetes. DKA is a medical emergency. Symptoms include:

- Fruity breath
- Dry/flushed skin
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Stomach pains
- Trouble breathing
- Confusion

### **Type 1 Diabetes Treatments**

There are no known ways to prevent type 1 diabetes. Once type 1 diabetes develops, medication is the only treatment. If your child is diagnosed with type 1 diabetes, their health care provider will be able to help develop a treatment plan. Your child's health care provider may refer your child to an endocrinologist, a doctor specializing in the endocrine system and its disorders, such as diabetes.

Contact your child's school nurse, school administrator, or health care provider if you have questions.

### **References**

[Centers For Disease Control and Prevention: About Type 1 Diabetes](#)

[Children's Hospital of Philadelphia: Type 1 Diabetes](#)

[Mayo Clinic](#)

[Medline Plus: National Library of Medicine; Type 1 Diabetes](#)