

# What Do I Tell Other People?

Having your child diagnosed with diabetes can be a overwhelming experience. Out of concern, friends or parents of your child's friends may ask what happened. Here are a few answers to the questions you may receive.

**What is type 1 diabetes?** Type 1 diabetes is a condition where the body's immune system destroys the insulin-producing cells in the pancreas. This results in the pancreas producing little or no insulin. Since insulin is needed to live, a person diagnosed with type 1 diabetes needs to receive insulin through injection or through a pump.

**Is it the same as Type 2 Diabetes?** No. In type 1 diabetes, the the body does not produce any insulin. In type 2 diabetes, the body still produces insulin but it does not work properly. Type 1 diabetes is most often diagnosed in children, while type 2 diabetes is most often diagnosed in adults. Type 2 diabetes is associated with a diet high in carbohydrates. While there are some people with type 2 Diabetes who take insulin, it can most often be managed with diet, exercise and oral medications.

**How did they get it?** We do not know why type 1 diabetes occurs.

**Is it preventable?** There is no way to prevent type 1 diabetes.

**What do you do to manage it?** Throughout the day, you keep track of carbohydrates and give insulin (via injection or pump) to try to keep blood glucose levels within a certain range. You use a blood glucose meter or continuous glucose monitor (CGM) to check blood glucose levels. If levels are too high, you give insulin to bring them down. If too low, you give carbohydrates to raise them.

**Can they eat sugar?** Yes, they can eat sugar. However it is important, as it is with all children, to eat a healthy diet.

**Will they have it forever?** There is currently no cure for type 1 diabetes. However, with proper management, your child can still do things that most kids do, like attend birthday parties or play sports.

*Updated 2/17/19*

*This document is not intended to take the place of the care and attention of your personal physician or other professional medical services. Our aim is to promote active participation in your care and treatment by providing information and education. Questions about*

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*individual health concerns or specific treatment options should be discussed with your physician.*

## **Recommended**

[What Do I Tell My Child About Diabetes?](#)

[Experiencing the Emotions of a New Diagnosis](#)

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## **Sources**

[Diabetes Basics— ADA](#)

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