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# PARENT HEALTH BULLETIN

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**MAY 2010**

## Activity and your heart

**Y**ou should try to include 60 minutes of activity into your day most days of the week. Try to include a variety of physical activities.

- **Everyday activities:** Playing outside when the weather allows
- **Recreational activities:** Relay races, basketball, volleyball, kickball, soccer, walking, swimming, skipping, hiking, jumping rope, biking, jumping jacks, skating, and running
- **Leisure and playtime activities:** Miniature golf, canoeing, tumbling, and fishing
- **Strength and flexibility activities:** Martial arts, rope climbing, ballet/dance, stretching, pull-ups, and push-ups

Adapted from GMK: Hard-Working Hearts



## THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: DIABETES

### What is diabetes?

**D**iabetes is a very serious condition in which the sugar in the blood, or blood glucose, is too high. Diabetes is caused by either not enough insulin being made in the pancreas or the body not using insulin as it should. Insulin works to change the sugar in foods to energy for the body.

The most common form of diabetes in youth is type 1 diabetes. This type of diabetes cannot be prevented and happens when the pancreas does not produce enough insulin. Even doctors don't know who may get this type of diabetes.

**Continued on the back** →



## ***Diabetics should always check blood glucose before and after exercising.***

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Another form of diabetes is called type 2 diabetes. In this type of diabetes, insulin is produced by the pancreas, but the body does not use it properly. It is most often seen in people who are overweight. There are things that can help prevent this type of diabetes such as changes in lifestyle.

### **What are the symptoms of diabetes?**

Some people do not have any symptoms of diabetes. Some of the most common signs and symptoms include:

- Going to the bathroom often
- Being very thirsty
- Being extremely tired
- Being extremely hungry
- Experiencing unusual weight loss
- Having thick, dark skin on the neck or under the arms

### **Can diabetes be prevented?**

Type 1 diabetes cannot be prevented. Youth with this condition need insulin shots to keep their blood glucose normal.

Type 2 diabetes can sometimes be stopped or slowed down by:

- Eating healthy foods
- Getting to or staying at a healthy weight
- Being physically active

### **Who gets type 2 diabetes?**

People with type 2 diabetes often:

- Are overweight
- Do not get enough exercise
- Have a family member with diabetes
- Are African-American, Hispanic, or Native-American

### **How is type 2 diabetes treated?**

Medications may be needed for type 2 diabetes, but often just losing weight and exercising regularly can help. It is very important for youth with diabetes to take charge of their own health by following the advice of their doctor.

### **What can be done to prevent diabetes complications?**

Diabetes can lead to health problems if not treated. Problems like heart attacks, blindness, kidney failure, and others may be seen after many years of diabetes that is not taken care of properly.



Doing the following things can help to prevent diabetes complications:

- Checking blood glucose
- Having regular doctor visits
- Following a healthy eating plan
- Being physically active at least 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week

Exercise will help diabetics use the glucose in their body for energy and will lower blood sugar. Diabetics should always check blood glucose before and after exercising.

#### **SOURCES:**

- The American Diabetes Association: <http://www.diabetes.org>
- Kentucky Diabetes Prevention and Control Program: <http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/info/dpqi/cd/diabetes.htm>
- National Diabetes Education Program: <http://www.ndep.nih.gov/>
- KidsHealth: <http://www.kidshealth.org/>

Adapted from the April 2006 HEEL Health Bulletin

PARENT  
**HEALTH  
BULLETIN**  
MAY 2010

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