

# Always remember that you are your child's *superhero*.

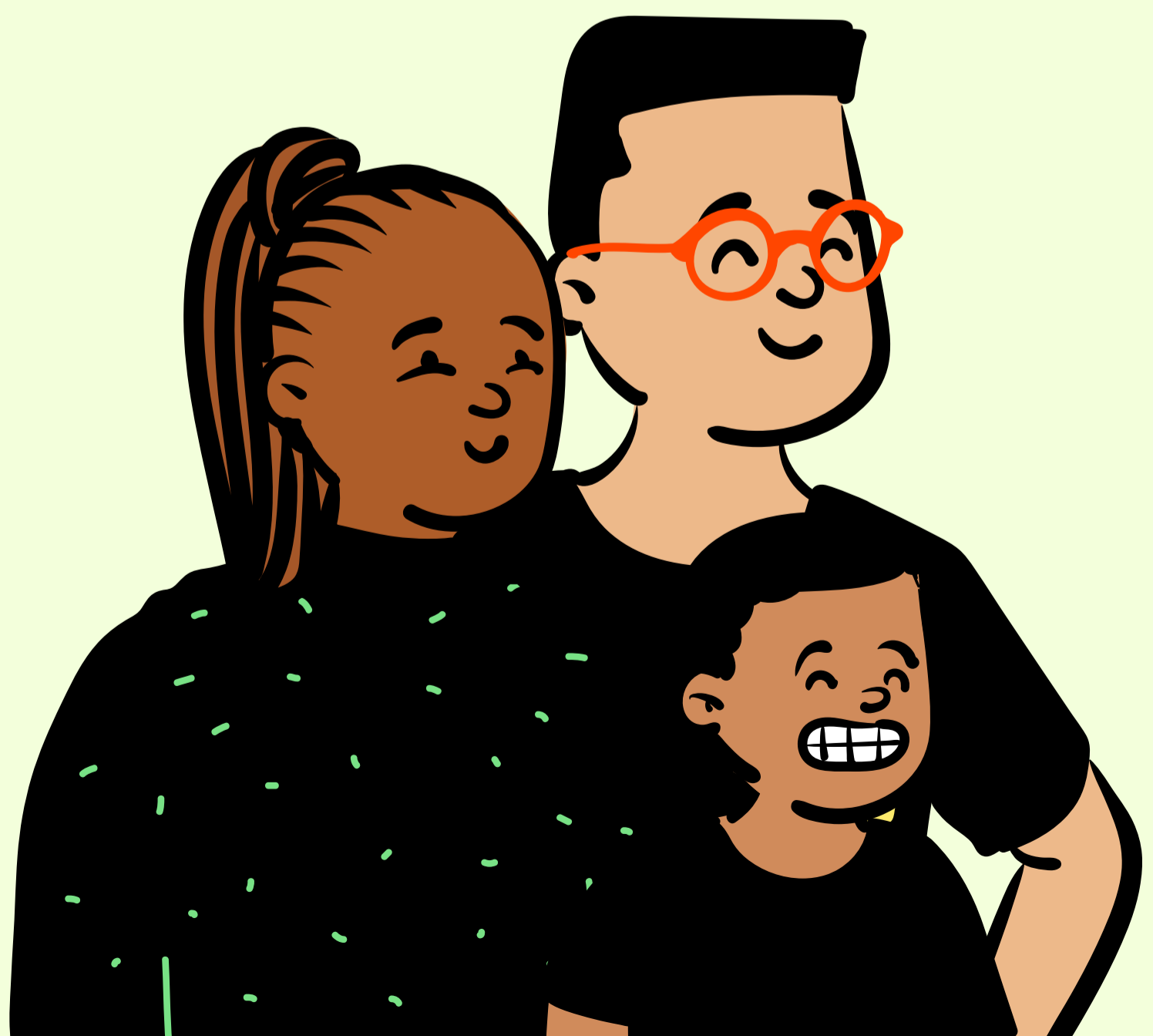
Learning that your child has diabetes can be a shock, but once the initial reaction fades, you'll realize there are many ways to support them. While managing diabetes daily can be challenging, it's a challenge you and your child can face together.

With the right preparation and planning, you can return to daily life and continue your regular activities. You can help incorporate physical activity into every day and create a balanced eating plan that works for your loved one—and the whole family. Most importantly, know that diabetes doesn't have to stop your child from pursuing their dreams or reaching their highest potential. There are olympic athletes, professional football players, politicians, actors, rock stars, and CEOs who live with diabetes. So, take a deep breath. You can do so much to ensure your child thrives while managing their diabetes with Quop.

## Guide for Parents

### Diabetes Resources

All about diabetes for you and your family



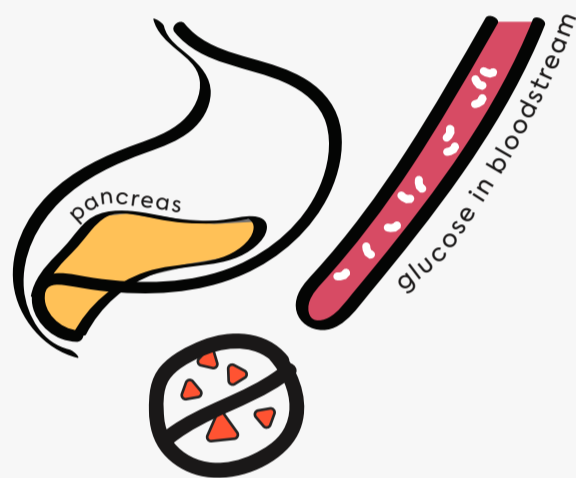
# So, what is *diabetes*?

Diabetes is a chronic condition that causes high blood sugar levels. Diabetes occurs when the body is unable to produce or effectively use insulin. Insulin is a hormone produced by the body that moves sugar from the bloodstream into cells to use as fuel.

## Type 1 Diabetes

Type 1 diabetes (T1D) occurs when the body's immune system attacks insulin-producing cells and completely stops producing insulin. It is not clear what causes the immune system to act this way. People with type 1 diabetes require insulin administration to control blood sugar.

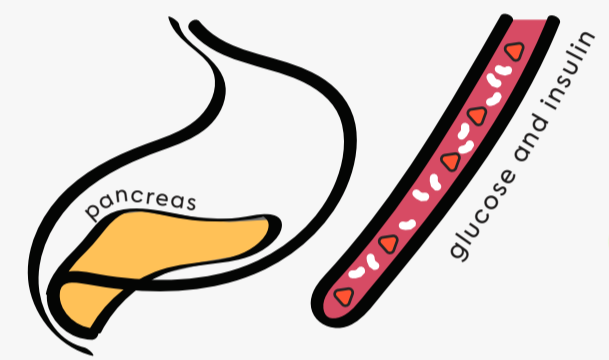
The process does not produce insulin and glucose builds up in the bloodstream.



## Type 2 Diabetes

Type 2 diabetes (T2D) is the most common form of diabetes. It occurs when the body is not able to produce enough insulin or cells develop insulin resistance. Type 2 diabetes can be the result of a combination of genetics, poor diet, lack of exercise, or obesity.

The process produces little insulin or there is insulin resistance. Glucose can not enter the cells and builds up in the bloodstream.



## Treatment

Currently, there is no cure for diabetes yet, but there are treatments to help manage diabetes. These treatments include:

### Healthy Sleep Cycle

At least 7 hours of sleep means more next-day BGs in range, less insulin, more energy, better mood, and less hunger. Also invest in a better mattress and pillow and do not settle for uncomfortable sleep.



### Controlled Regular Exercise

Choose activities your kids find fun and actually want to do. Your actions give your kids a clear message about what's important to you. As your kids learn a new skill, they'll notice their own progress and boost their self-esteem. Be sure to recognize their efforts.



### Balanced Diet

Choose breakfast foods high in protein, fat, and fiber. Fill half of your plate with vegetables. Check BG 2-3 hours after meals (or wear CGM) to learn what foods work and make course corrections.



### Precise Insulin Injection

Monitor blood sugar values to understand how your child is doing. Use a blood glucose monitor device or a continuous glucose monitor device. A rise in glucose levels could be a sign that your child is not getting enough insulin.



# Hyperglycemia – a ‘hyper’

Hyperglycemia happens when the level of glucose in the blood is too high. In extreme cases, children may vomit and be unable to hold down fluids.

## Watch out for:

- Increased thirst
- Frequent urination
- Blood ketones
- Weakness
- Abdominal pains
- Generalized aches
- Loss of appetite
- Feeling and being sick
- Heavy breathing

## What to do?

- Test your child’s blood sugar level more often and check for ketones (ask your child’s Diabetes Educator to show you the test for ketones).
  - If your child has ketones, follow the sick day directions provided to you by your Doctor or Diabetes Educator. If you are unsure, go to the nearest emergency room.
  - If your child is able to swallow, encourage them to drink fluids such as water or sugar free drinks. This will help them stay hydrated.
- **Your child must never miss their insulin injection**

## Causes:

Too little or no insulin, eating more carbohydrates than their diet allows for, infection, fever, emotional stress, less exercise taken than usual

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# Hypoglycemia – a ‘hypo’

Hypoglycemia happens when the level of sugar in the blood is less than 4.0mmol/L in older children or less than 6.0 mmol/L in toddlers or pre-schoolers.

## Watch out for:

- Excessive sweating
- Blurred vision
- Faintness
- Hunger
- Paleness
- Irritability/confusion
- Headache
- Lack of concentration
- Tingling lips
- Personality change
- Pounding of heart
- Difficulty awakening
- Anxiety
- Shaking

## What to do?

- If possible, test your child’s blood sugar to confirm that it is low. If you are not able to test, it is still safer to treat.
- To treat, give your child some source of sugar, ideally at least 15 g of fast acting carbohydrate. Examples include: glucose tabs (3-4), 3 teaspoons or 3 packets of table sugar dissolved in water or 3/4 cup of juice. For infants or toddlers, some parents keep a tube of cake frosting handy.
- Let your child rest until their blood sugar comes back to normal and then provide them a healthy snack like cheese and crackers or a sandwich. If the hypo occurs just before a meal or snack, you should still give your child the “sugar” and then have their meal.
- **In extreme cases, a child can pass out or become unconscious. If this happens:**
  - fluid should not be given to them
  - an injection of glucagon should be given
  - if a glucagon emergency kit is not available, call 911

## Causes:

Too much insulin, not enough food, unusual amount of exercise, delayed meal, stress, hot weather

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# Managing Emotions

When a child is diagnosed with diabetes, parents often focus on the physical impact of the disease. However, it's important to remember that a diabetes diagnosis also brings emotional challenges.

Parents often go through a grieving process upon learning that their child has diabetes. Coming to terms with the fact that their child has a chronic condition requiring lifelong management can be challenging. It's completely normal to experience feelings of grief and sadness. Many parents also grapple with guilt, questioning whether they could have somehow prevented the disease. Additionally, worries about recognizing the symptoms of diabetes-related issues and ensuring proper medical care are common. So, how can you cope with these emotions? First, seek answers to your questions from the healthcare professionals who are caring for your child. Connecting with other parents in similar situations can also provide support and comfort.

It's so important to see to your own needs as well as your child's. When you can let relatives and friends share the responsibilities of caring for your family, remember that you can't do it all.

## How do kids with diabetes feel?

Some emotions that children might feel after learning that they have diabetes are:

- *Isolation* or feeling different from friends
- *Denial* or pretending that they do not have diabetes
- *Depression* or sadness, and hopelessness
- *Guilt* or feeling like they caused problems for parents, siblings, and teachers
- *Fear and Anxiety* of blood sugar control problems, needles, or long term health problems
- *Anger* or frustration with the disease and its treatment
- *Embarrassment* about the extra attention they are getting



# The Newly Diagnosed

Here are some strategies to help see you through!

## 1. Educate Yourself

Diabetes education is essential. The more you understand, the greater your sense of control, which can lead to improved well-being.

## 2. Assemble Your Team

Ensure that everyone in the family is trained to check blood sugar levels and administer insulin. This not only keeps your child safe but also prevents the responsibility of treatment from falling solely on one parent.

## 3. Set an Example

Especially when it comes to injections, it's important to remember that your approach to treatment can influence how your child perceives and accepts it.

## 4. Know That It Should Get Easier

Parents often feel scared at the beginning, but it's crucial to understand that you can manage the situation. Many parents navigate this daily, and you might be surprised at how well you can handle it, too.

## 5. Tend to Your Emotional Health

Consider including a counselor and a social worker as part of your diabetes management team to help you navigate feelings of anger, depression, or fatigue. Attending a support group meeting can also provide valuable assistance and connection.

## You are not alone in this journey.

Don't hesitate to reach out to us or any of these organizations if you need assistance in managing diabetes. Sometimes, connecting with others who are facing similar challenges can enhance your confidence in handling your child's diabetes. Remember, you are not alone in this blue circle.

- International Diabetes Foundation
- American Diabetes Associations
- Type One Nation
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- European Foundation for the Study of Diabetes
- National Diabetes Education Program (NDEP)
- National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse (NDIC)
- Hormone Health Network
- JDRF

