

Life expectancy for those with Type 1 diabetes improving, study says

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The life expectancy of people diagnosed with type 1 diabetes dramatically increased during the course of a 30-year, long-term prospective study, according to a University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health study being presented at the 71st Scientific Sessions of the American Diabetes Association.

The [life expectancy](#) for participants diagnosed with type 1 [diabetes](#) between 1965 and 1980 was 68.8 years – a 15-year improvement, compared to those diagnosed between 1950 and 1964, according to the study. Meanwhile, the life expectancy of the general U.S. population increased less than one year during the same time period.

"The estimated 15-year life expectancy improvement between the two groups persisted regardless of gender or pubertal status at diagnosis," said Trevor J. Orchard, M.D., lead author of the study and professor of epidemiology, pediatrics and medicine at the University of Pittsburgh.

The results, found in Abstract Number 0078-OR, are based on participants in the Pittsburgh Epidemiology of Diabetes Complications (EDC) study, a long-term prospective study of childhood onset type 1 diabetes, which began in 1986. Participants in the study, who were an average age of 28 when entering the study and 44 at its completion, were diagnosed with type 1 diabetes between 1950 and 1980.

"Type 1 diabetes mortality rates have decreased over time, but formal life expectancy estimates for those diagnosed with type 1 diabetes in the

United States are lacking," Orchard said. "Therefore, we estimated the all-cause mortality experience and life expectancy of the EDC study cohort."

The 30-year mortality of participants diagnosed with type 1 diabetes from 1965 to 1980 was 11.6 percent – a significant decline from the 35.6 percent 30-year mortality of those diagnosed between 1950 and 1964, according to the study.

Previously known as juvenile diabetes, type 1 diabetes is usually diagnosed in children and young adults. In [type 1 diabetes](#), the pancreas produces little or no insulin to properly control blood sugar levels. It is typically treated with insulin replacement therapy.

Provided by University of Pittsburgh

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