

Type 1 diabetes increasing among white american kids

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Children 5 to 9 years old hardest hit, study finds.

(HealthDay)—The rate of type 1 diabetes has increased substantially among elementary school-age white children in the United States, a new study shows.

The study of young white people found nearly 6,000 new cases diagnosed in teens and kids ages 19 and younger between 2002 and 2009. Youngsters between 5 and 9 years old accounted for most new cases, while no increase was seen among kids younger than 4, the authors said. Boys were slightly more affected than girls.

Type 1 [diabetes](#)—previously called [juvenile diabetes](#)—is the predominant form of diabetes diagnosed in childhood. People with the disease lose their ability to produce insulin, a hormone needed to convert food into energy for daily life.

"The incidence has been rising in many other countries, particularly in Europe, but data from large populations in the U.S. were limited," said the study's lead author, Jean Lawrence, of the Kaiser Permanente Southern California department of research and evaluation.

More research is needed to better understand why the prevalence of [type 1 diabetes](#) among American [children](#) is on the rise, and what racial and ethnic differences exist, the researchers said.

The findings were culled from one of the largest U.S. studies of diabetes in children—the SEARCH for Diabetes in Youth registry—involving data on more than 2 million children and teens living in diverse parts of the United States.

From 2002 to 2009, the rate of type 1 diabetes jumped from 24.4 per 100,000 children to 27.4 per 100,000 youths, according to the study published Oct. 23 in *Diabetes*.

Although children between 5 and 9 years old accounted for most new cases of type 1 diabetes, smaller increases were also found among children and teens between 10 and 19 years old.

"This project provides a much larger and more geographically diverse sample than previous studies in the U.S.," said Lawrence in a Kaiser Permanente news release. It involved centers in California, Colorado, Ohio, South Carolina and Washington.

Only about 5 percent of all people with diabetes have type 1, according to the American Diabetes Association. Young people diagnosed with the disease will require ongoing specialized medical care.

This includes insulin injections and other treatments to manage their condition and delay or prevent diabetes-related complications that often

affect the eyes, nerves and kidneys, according to background information from the release.

More information: The American Diabetes Association provides more information on [type 1 diabetes](#).

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