Nemours Children's Health Study Strengthens Evidence That Boosting Emotional Health Improves Glycemic Control in Kids with Type 1 Diabetes

Study finds that behavioral interventions are most effective when they involve the whole family



ORLANDO, Florida (September 24, 2026) — For children with type 1 diabetes, managing the disease can take an emotional toll as well as a physical one. Depression, anxiety, and burnout are common as kids learn to monitor their blood sugar, adjust their diet, and navigate medications. That is why clinicians may pair medical care with behavioral interventions. A new study by Nemours Children's Health researchers, published today in *Pediatrics,* suggests that those who receive interventions that support both mental health and diabetes management had moderately better blood sugar levels than those who did not.

Alexandra Monzon, PhD, Assistant Research Scientist with the Nemours Children's Health Center for Healthcare Delivery Science in Orlando, led this latest study. The large meta-analysis of studies published between April 2009 and February 2025 found that interventions were most effective for diabetes in children when they combined direct efforts to improve medical adherence with indirect interventions designed to address psychosocial factors.

The study also found that interventions were most effective when they were delivered during a regular appointment for diabetes care, possibly reflecting high degrees of trust among patients and families with established care providers. Importantly, the most effective interventions were those that involved the whole family, rather than focusing solely on the patient or solely on the caregivers.

“The past decade has brought powerful technical advances to patients with type 1 diabetes, such as continuous glucose monitors, automated insulin delivery systems, and telehealth, which have transformed the context in which behavioral interventions operate," Dr. Monzon explained. "The results of this study demonstrate the effectiveness and importance of behavior-focused care amid the realities of contemporary type 1 diabetes management.”

Dr. Monzon said this study confirms the importance of behavior interventions in relieving emotional distress and boosting pediatric patients' engagement in type 1 diabetes management.

"Behavioral strategies may have a greater impact when they are reinforced continuously and integrated with advancing technology, helping to further improve outcomes,” she said. “Given that type 1 diabetes affects more than 300,000 children in America, this research demonstrates how important it is to use multiple strategies to minimize the impact on kids' physical and emotional well-being.”

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Dr. Monzon further discussed her study in a video abstract published by *Pediatrics*.

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About Nemours Children's Health

Nemours Children's Health is one of the nation's largest multistate pediatric health systems, which includes two free-standing children's hospitals and a network of 80 primary and specialty care practices. In 2025, Nemours Children's served more than 565,000 unique patients. Nemours Children's seeks to transform the health of children by adopting a holistic health model that utilizes innovative, safe, and high-quality care, while also addressing children's needs well beyond medicine. In producing the highly acclaimed, award-winning pediatric medicine podcast Well Beyond Medicine, Nemours underscores that

commitment by featuring the people, programs and partnerships addressing Whole Child Health. Nemours Children's also powers the world's most-visited website for information on the health of children and teens, Nemours KidsHealth.org.

The Nemours Foundation, established through the legacy and philanthropy of Alfred I. duPont, provides pediatric clinical care, research, education, advocacy, and prevention programs to the children, families and communities it serves. For more information, visit Nemours.org.

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