

## Tips For the Informed Parent

### Healthy Homes

Fill your home with healthy snacks like fruit, vegetables, whole wheat crackers, and low fat dairy products instead of sweetened beverages and fatty foods. Try eating as a family and limit the times you eat out.



### Be The Role Models

Your children look up to you and adopt your behaviors—both good and bad! So make healthy choices every day, like eating lots of fruits and vegetables, and being physically active most days, for your health and your children's!

### A Fit Family is a Healthy Family

Active children are more likely to be active adults. Try running around with your kids, going for a walk, or doing stretches together because it is not only fun, but good for you too! Remember to limit TV and computer time.

### Doctor Visits

Regular check-ups are the best way to catch problems early before they get out of control. If you do not have a regular doctor Bronx Health REACH will be happy to help you connect to one.

Bronx Health REACH works with the Bronx faith-based community to improve health and get access to better health care. If you have any questions please contact Bronx Health REACH, at 212-633-0800 ext. 1232 or visit [www.bronxhealthreach.org](http://www.bronxhealthreach.org)



**NOVEMBER IS  
DIABETES MONTH**

**Help Your Child Be Healthy**



## Preventing Diabetes

Increasing numbers of children are being diagnosed with diabetes as they put on more weight and their waist line expands.

As an informed parent you can do a lot to help prevent diabetes by catching it early enough to prevent any serious complications.

Turn the page to learn more.

## Does My Child have a Dirty Neck or Diabetes?

Have you noticed a patch of dark, rough or “dirty looking” skin on your child’s neck, armpit, knees or knuckles? If so, look a little closer before telling him to scrub harder in the bath tub.

The “dirty looking” patch of skin may actually be a sign that your child is at increased risk for developing diabetes.

➔ **WHAT IS IT?** Commonly called “dirty neck,” this condition is known in medical terms as acanthosis nigricans (AAY-can-THO-sis NIG-ruh-cans) or A.N.



➔ **INSULIN RESISTANCE:**

The exact cause of A.N. is unknown, but it has been linked to overweight/obesity and insulin resistance. Insulin is the hormone that keeps amount of sugar in your blood normal. If your body can't use it properly any more this is called insulin resistance. This leads to a build up of extra insulin that is thought to cause the skin discoloration of A.N.

➔ **IS IT TYPE II DIABETES?** Since both obesity and insulin resistance are associated with an increased risk for Type II diabetes, AN may be a sign of this diabetes. But, having “dirty neck” does not mean your child has or will get diabetes.

**Talk to your doctor** if you see a dark, rough patch of skin or you are concerned about your child’s risk for diabetes



## What are the Warning Signs?

Catch diabetes early! In addition to a “dirty neck,” be on the look out for the following warning signs of diabetes:

- Always thirsty.
- Always hungry.
- Using the bathroom more often than usual.
- More tired than usual.
- Trouble with seeing things



Many children and teens don't notice any of these warning signs. They find out they have diabetes when they go to the doctor for a check-up. So make sure to take your child to the doctor regularly, and talk to the doctor about whether or not your child is at risk for getting diabetes.

## What Puts Your Child at Risk?

Your child is at an increased risk for diabetes if he or she:

- Is overweight
- Doesn't get enough physical activity
- Has a parent, brother, or sister with diabetes
- Is African American, Hispanic American, Native American, Asian American, or Pacific Islander
- Eating too many high-calorie foods
- Has other insulin resistant conditions like high blood pressure and blood fat disorders



**FACT:** Eating too much sugar does not cause diabetes!