

No longer considered to be a condition of primarily adult onset, **type 2 diabetes has become increasingly common among children aged 6-11 years and adolescents aged 12-19 years.** Although there has been no definitive large-scale reporting of incidence within these age groups, a recent epidemiological review has led to the suggestion that as many as 8-45% of new-onset pediatric diabetes cases in the United States may be type 2.^{1,3} The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported ~ 206,000 cases of diabetes among those < 20 years of age in the United States, giving an estimated prevalence of 0.25%.⁴ As in adults, it may be that many childhood cases also go unrecognized, resulting in the possibility of a substantial number of children and adolescents with undiagnosed type 2 diabetes. The increase in type 2 diabetes among children and adolescents has emerged in parallel with an alarming rise in the number of young people who have become overweight or obese (Figure 1). Along with family history, obesity stands out as a prominent risk factor for the development of type 2 diabetes. Over the past 20 years, the prevalence of childhood and adolescent obesity has doubled, and without increased measures for prevention, these numbers will likely continue to rise.⁵ Although children and adolescents representing all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups have been affected by this trend, Native Americans, Hispanics, and African Americans have become particularly susceptible to the epidemic of obesity.^{2,6} (Figure 2). Type 2 diabetes is especially on the rise within these groups, and the prevalence of hypertension among African-American and Hispanic children is also increasing, putting them at increased risk for developing cardiovascular disease.⁷

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