Mackenson’s Triumph Over Diabetes
Hi, my name is Mackenson and this is my story about diabetes. I was always healthy until one summer when I started losing weight, drinking lots of water and peeing all the time.

My mom said sadly, “Mackenson, I know something is wrong. You are not feeling well. Your pee is even sticking to the toilet, attracting ants. I wish I knew what is causing this.”

Kay Mackenson Clinic is dedicated to caring for children and young adults with diabetes and other chronic diseases. We will help you overcome illness and allow you to live your life to the fullest extent possible. Please enjoy this book as a gift to help you learn about diabetes.

Kay Mackenson Clinic staff

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Summary: Mackenson, suffering with diabetes in Haiti, experiences how the medicine and education offered by a medical clinic restores him to health.

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My mom started giving me extra food because I was getting so skinny but it didn't help. She knew she had taken good care of my health. She knew I did not have a fever or a rash. Yet, I just kept feeling worse and wasn't even hungry any more.

My mom's friend, Marie, stopped by on her way to market to check on me. “Marie, I am worried about Mackenson’s health,” my mom said.

Maria answered with care, “I understand. You have tried everything you know to help your son feel better. Maybe you should take him to an herbalist to see if they could help.”
My mother thought that was a good idea. So, she took me to see the herbalist.

She listened to my mother and looked me over. She said to us, “This is a stomach problem and you also have anemia.”

She gave my mom medical herbs.

She smiled comfortingly and said, “I can see that you don’t feel well. These will heal you, Mackenson.”
I took the herbs but kept feeling worse. Every day I got weaker and lost weight until I could no longer get up to walk to school.

Our neighbor, Annette, said she was also thirsty and peeing more last year when she was pregnant. The doctor told her that her body was doing these things since there was too much sugar in her blood.

Annette told me, “Mackenson, you should stop eating rice and instead, eat aloe at every meal.”

So my mother stopped preparing rice for me and I ate aloe at every meal, just like Annette said.
I kept getting worse and had belly pain, so my mom took me to a voudo house. He said there was an evil spirit sent by my neighbors to haunt me.

The voudo doctor told my mom, “Wash him in a mix of herbs to get rid of the spirit.”

The next day I was so sick that my mother could not wake me up.

She got my dad and told him, “Oh no, he’s not waking up and he’s breathing so fast. He has a bad odor. Let’s take him to the hospital.”
I went to the emergency room. The nurse tested my blood.

“Mackenson’s blood sugar,” she said to my parents, “is very high. He could have died if you hadn’t brought him to the hospital.”

My mom replied, “What is causing the problem?”

The nurse said, “I suspect Mackenson has diabetes.”

The nurse called the doctor. She started fluids and insulin to stabilize me.

She explained to my mom and dad, “Mackenson has juvenile diabetes. There was nothing you or anyone could have done to prevent it. Yet, medicine has a way to help!”

The nurse said to me, “Mackenson, don’t worry. You didn’t catch an illness from someone else or get it from a curse. Your body just needs help to use sugar correctly. You will have to test your blood and give yourself injections of insulin every day of your life from now on. This will make you feel better.”
The nurse gave me injections of insulin to bring down the sugar in my blood. I woke up feeling better and was hungry. After a couple of days in the hospital I was feeling much better. I wasn’t thirsty or peeing so much anymore. The hospital called the diabetes clinic and decided to send me and my mom there to learn how to take care of my diabetes.
We stopped by the pharmacy anyway. We wanted to buy some insulin and supplies, but the cost was too expensive for my family.

Mom and I took a tap-tap to the diabetes clinic. Nurse Viviane, Mascary and 4 children with diabetes greeted us.

I was surprised to see how many other kids had diabetes just like me.

The other children said, “We will help you learn how to take care of diabetes. Kids with diabetes aren’t contagious. It’s safe for us to be with other people.”
The nurse started teaching my mom and me how to test my blood, calculate the amount of insulin I needed for each amount of food I ate. It was a lot like learning math at school.

It didn’t take me very long to learn how to take care of myself. The needles were tiny and didn’t hurt as bad as I thought they would. I always make sure to clean my skin and put the needles in a safe place after I am done.
After a couple of weeks I was ready to go back home and play soccer with my friends again. I went back to school and felt normal like I had before I got diabetes. I noticed my friend Wilna was losing weight and drinking lots of extra water.

"Thank you!" I said and gave Mascary a hug. "Yes," added my mom. "Thank you for all your help and education."

Wilna nodded her head weakly and said, "Yes."

"Wilna, I notice that you having been losing weight and drinking lots of extra water. That is what I did before I got treatment for diabetes. May I test your blood with my glucometer?"

"It's 400. That is way too high," I warned Wilna, "just like mine had been when I was very sick."
I called Nurse Viviane at the diabetes clinic. “My friend Wilna’s blood reading is too high. I am worried about her,” I told her.

“Bring Wilna and her mom to us,” replied Vivane. “You have done a good job helping Wilna before she got too sick.”

I felt proud and happy to help. With help from others and from medicine, I had triumphed over diabetes again.
DIABETES IN CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS
KNOW THE WARNING SIGNS

- excessive thirst
- frequent urination
- weight loss
- lack of energy
- bed wetting

In late stages vomiting, dehydration, rapid deep breathing or coma (ketoacidosis) can occur – consider diabetes in any severely ill child or young adult.

If anyone shows these signs, check for diabetes immediately. Treatment is urgent.