

Dr Jon LaPook: Jason Peña is 10 years old and already a Type II diabetic. He hates the idea of having to take pills for the rest of his life.

Jason: It feels terrible.

LaPook: Why is that?

Jason: Because when you swallow it, it like stays in your throat.

LaPook: With an epidemic of obesity in children and the health problems it brings, pediatricians are increasingly pulling out their prescription pads⁽¹⁾ for help. A study of children ages 5 to 19 found, from 2002 to 2005, medication use increased for every chronic condition studied. The most dramatic jumps:

- Diabetes with a rate more than doubled,
- Asthma up almost 50%, and
- Attention Deficit Disorders⁽²⁾ up 40%.

One reason for the spike⁽³⁾, children are receiving aggressive therapy earlier than ever before for conditions like asthma and even high cholesterol.

Dr Susan Bostwick: We need to start thinking about treating children before they're showing the other signs things like early heart attack, early strokes, we need to be thinking about treating them earlier.

LaPook: In addition, over the past 10 years, more drugs have been approved for pediatric use, so doctors may feel more comfortable giving them.

Dr Bostwick: We're having to use more and more medication for things that are preventable but are not being prevented.

LaPook: A lot of these conditions have skyrocketed⁽⁴⁾ because of obesity, so the best prescription may be weight loss, exercise and eating right. Catie.

Catie Couric: Thank you Jon LaPook.

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Lexical helpline:

1. **a prescription pad:** the paper on which a doctor writes the names of the medicines he prescribes to a patient.
2. **Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD):** a developmental disorder affecting mainly children characterized by a lack of attention, difficulties concentrating and sometimes hyperactivity.
3. **a spike:** a peak
4. **skyrocket (v):** increase very rapidly