

## TESTIMONY



Testimony  
By  
**Daniel Thaller**  
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Accompanied by  
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Burlington, NC  
On Behalf of  
**Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation International**  
**Regarding Federal Support of Juvenile Diabetes Research**  
Before the  
**Senate Permanent Subcommittee on**  
**Investigations**

**Daniel Thaller**

My name is Daniel Thaller. I am twelve years old, live in North Carolina and I am one of the millions of Americans who has been diagnosed with juvenile diabetes.

I'm Daniel's sister, Cameron. I'm 9 years old and I was diagnosed with juvenile diabetes when I was four.

My name is Jessica Thaller. I'm 13 years old and I've had diabetes for over 7 years.

It all started for me when my mother realized my diapers had been overflowing and I had been very thirsty. Only at a regular checkup was it discovered that these symptoms would reveal a radical change in my and my parents' lives. With the diagnosis came the unthinkable task of giving a toddler multiple daily insulin shots and finger pricks. If you are a parent, how do you explain to your toddler that what you are doing is what will keep him alive?

After my diagnosis my mother did monthly blood sugar checks for both of my sisters, even though doctors told her it was "highly unlikely" that either would get it. Can you imagine the shock my parents felt two years later when they discovered a second child had diabetes, and the amazement and depression

they felt three years later when their third child was diagnosed. Lightning CAN strike twice (and even 3 times).

Together, my sisters and I have endured more 25,000 finger pricks.

School can be really hard for a child with juvenile diabetes. Low blood sugars can make it hard for me to concentrate, and high blood sugars make me grumpy or hyper. Sometimes, diabetes affects my performance in school and sports, as well as my social life. If I can't concentrate, how can I get A's? If I feel weak and dizzy, how can I hit a homerun? If I feel sick to my stomach, how can I go to the movies with my friends?

My friends and teachers sometimes ask, "Does that hurt?" or "What's that thing?" I get sick of the attention. Some people even know me as "the guy with diabetes." My sister Jessica has described this as feeling like being a lab rat in a cage. Unless you've lived it, you can have no idea what living with juvenile diabetes is like.

A cure for diabetes is very important to me because I have had it for so long! Eight years is 4/5ths of my life! I can't even remember what life was like without diabetes. Congress should give more funds for the research to find a cure for diabetes because millions of people suffer from it. 16 million people in the United States alone have the disease. Every day, 35 children are diagnosed with juvenile diabetes. That's 35 more kids who will ask themselves "why me?" every day for the rest of their lives. Please remember me and my sisters and give more money for diabetes research the next chance you get.

Thank you.