May is National Prader-Willi Syndrome (PWS) Awareness Month

What is Prader-Willi Syndrome (PWS)?

Prader-Willi syndrome (PWS) is a variable and complex genetic disorder resulting from an abnormality on the 15th chromosome. It occurs in males and females equally and in all races. PWS is diagnosed in 1:15,000 to 1:25,000 newborns each year.

Key features include:

- **Insatiable Hunger**: A distinctive trait of PWS is an unending appetite. This, paired with a slowed metabolism, often leads to significant weight challenges.
- **Muscle & Growth**: Individuals with Prader-Willi syndrome typically have weak muscle tone and less muscle mass. They also often grow to be shorter than average if they don’t receive the right treatment.
- **Cognitive Aspects**: People with PWS can face learning disabilities, making everyday tasks a little bit tougher.
- **Behavioral Challenges**: People with Prader-Willi syndrome often face various behavioral challenges. These can include frequent temper tantrums, compulsive skin picking, stubbornness, and obsessive-compulsive behaviors. Managing these behaviors requires patience and understanding.
- **Sleep-Related Issues**: Individuals living with PWS often experience sleep-related issues including Excessive Daytime Sleepiness (EDS) and Narcolepsy

PWS is rare and many have not heard of it. There are very few medical specialists familiar with PWS. However, Prader-Willi Syndrome Association | USA is here to offer support and hope to families who are newly diagnosed and throughout your journey with PWS! Our website is full of resources on PWS and we have a dedicated staff standing by ready to assist you 24-hours a day, 365 days a year.