

MARCH:

ALL ABOUT DIABETES

Diabetes is a disease in which the body does not produce or properly use insulin, a hormone needed to convert sugar, starches and other food into energy required for our daily activities. While the cause of diabetes remains unclear, both genetics and environmental factors such as obesity and lack of exercise appear to contribute.

There are 23.6 million adults and children in the USA, or 7.8% of the population, who have diabetes. While about 18 million have been diagnosed with diabetes, the rest (nearly one quarter of the total) are unaware that they have the disease. Your health care provider can perform simple tests to determine whether or not you have pre-diabetes or diabetes.

One out of every five health care dollars is spent caring for someone with diagnosed diabetes: the total annual economic cost of diabetes in 2007 was estimated to be \$174 billion, and increases more than \$8 billion each year!

TYPES OF DIABETES

Type 1 diabetes results from the body's failure to produce insulin, the hormone that allows glucose (a form of sugar) to enter the body's cells and provide fuel for their work. It is estimated that 5-10% of diabetic Americans have type 1 diabetes. Often diagnosed in children and young adults, it was previously referred to as juvenile diabetes.

Type 2 diabetes results from insulin resistance – a condition in which the body fails to produce enough insulin, or the cells ignore the insulin available. Most diabetic Americans have type 2 diabetes. While type 2 diabetes is more common in Latinos, Asians, African Americans and older adults, it is now being diagnosed more frequently among obese youngsters.

Gestational diabetes related to pregnancy, usually type 2.

Pre-diabetes is a condition that occurs when a person's blood glucose levels are higher than normal, but not high enough for a diagnosis of diabetes. There are 57 million Americans with pre-diabetes, in addition to the 23.6 million with confirmed diabetes.



DIABETES DIAGNOSED

The diagnosis of diabetes is based on laboratory tests:

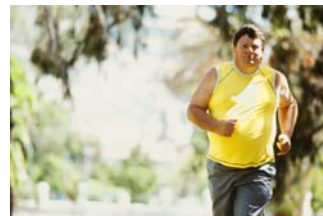
- A fasting plasma glucose (FPG) level between 100 and 125 mg/dL signals pre-diabetes; a FPG level of 126 mg/dL or higher indicates diabetes. This test is done twice to verify the diagnosis.
- In the oral glucose tolerance test (OGTT), a person's blood glucose level is measured after a fast and two hours after drinking a special high-glucose beverage; if the two-hour blood glucose level is 140-199 mg/dL, the

person tested has pre-diabetes; if the two-hour blood glucose level is 200 mg/dL or higher, the person has diabetes.

PREVENTION & MANAGEMENT

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), many factors contribute to the increase in diabetes: prevalence of overweight and obesity, longer life expectancy, a growing elderly population and growth in minority populations in whom rates of diabetics are increasing.

If you have diabetes, make it a priority to take good care of your body. The time you spend now on eye care, foot care and skin care, as well as your heart health and oral hygiene, could delay or prevent the onset of dangerous complications of diabetes later in life. One of the best things you can do is to get exercise! For a list of guidelines, go to www.diabetes.org/type-1-diabetes/well-being.jsp



WHAT CAN EXERCISE DO FOR ME?

Exercise – including anything that gets you moving, such as walking, dancing or working in the yard, will earn you benefits, even without going to the gym, playing sports, or using fancy expensive equipment. When you're fit, you have the strength, flexibility and endurance needed for your daily activities, and it helps you feel better physically and mentally. Look at the rewards! –

- Improve blood glucose control (activity makes your body use your insulin more efficiently, and also burns glucose, to reduce insulin needs).
- Lower your blood pressure, making the heart pump slower and stronger.
- Improve blood fats/cholesterol: exercise lowers bad cholesterol ("LDL") and triglycerides while raising the level of good ("HDL") cholesterol.
- Lose weight... and keep it off! Activity burns calories, trimming away excess pounds.
- Lower your risk for other health problems such as heart disease, stroke, some cancers, and bone loss.
- Gain more energy and sleep better: you'll sleep more soundly, feel rested in less time, and have more energy while you're awake.
- Relieve stress: work out or walk off daily stress.
- Build stronger bones and muscles: weight bearing activities, such as walking, make our bones stronger; strength-training activities, such as lifting light weights (even a can of beans in each hand!) helps to build muscle mass.
- Increase your flexibility and balance, making movement easier and reducing the risk of falls and fractured bones.

Find additional information at www.diabetes.org

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