

Nutrition News

VOLUME 10, No. 11

A COMMUNITY NUTRITION PROGRAMS NEWSLETTER

Beth Reames
PhD, LDN, RD

November is American Diabetes Month

Learn more about prevention, control

November is American Diabetes Month, and every year during this month the American Diabetes Association encourages the public to learn more about diabetes and the importance of diabetes prevention and control.

The theme for the 2011 American Diabetes Month is "I Raise My Hand to Stop Diabetes."

Diabetes is now an epidemic in the United States. Nearly 26 million adults and children are living with either type 1 or type 2 diabetes. Another 79 million people have pre-diabetes – meaning they have some, but not all, of the symptoms of diabetes – and are at risk for developing type 2 diabetes. Recent estimates project that as many as one in three American adults will have diabetes by the middle of the century (2050) if current trends continue.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, diabetes kills more people each year than breast cancer and AIDS combined.

Diabetes takes a tremendous toll on health, according to the American Diabetes Association. These facts demonstrate the toll:

- Two out of three people with diabetes die from heart disease or stroke.
- Diabetes is the leading cause of kidney failure.
- Diabetes is the leading cause of new cases of blindness among adults.
- The rate of amputation for people with diabetes is 10 times higher than for people without diabetes.
- About 60-70 percent of people with diabetes have mild to severe forms of nerve damage that could result in pain in the feet or hands, slowed digestion, sexual dysfunction and other nerve problems.
- The total national cost of diagnosed diabetes in the United States is \$174 billion.

There are two major types of diabetes, type 1 and type 2:

Type 1 diabetes is a disease that occurs because the body can't make insulin, and glucose (sugar) levels in the blood get too high. Insulin is a hormone produced in the pancreas that the body needs to move glucose from the blood into body cells where it is used for energy.

Type 1 diabetes used to be called "juvenile diabetes" and "insulin dependent diabetes." Most cases of type 1 diabetes develop in youth, but the disease can develop at any age. Five percent to 10 percent of all diabetes cases are type 1.

Type 2 diabetes, which is the most common type, is a disease that occurs because the body either can't make enough insulin or can't use insulin properly, which causes glucose (sugar) to build up in the blood. Type 2 diabetes previously was known as "adult onset diabetes" and "noninsulin dependent diabetes."

Type 2 diabetes usually begins as insulin resistance in which a person's cells do not use insulin properly, resulting in the pancreas gradually losing its ability to produce insulin.

About 90 percent to 95 percent of diabetes cases are type 2. Most cases of type 2 diabetes begin after age 30 or 40, but the number of children and teens with type 2 diabetes is increasing.

The risk for diabetes increases with age, excessive weight gain and inactivity. Diabetes is more common in African Americans, Latinos, Native Americans, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.



LSU
AgCenter
Research & Extension

SU
Center
SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY
AGRICULTURAL
RESEARCH & EXTENSION
C E N T E R

Diabetes complications include heart disease, blindness, kidney disease, stroke and amputations. Keeping blood glucose, blood pressure and cholesterol under control can reduce the risk for heart attack or stroke.

Although diabetes can't be cured, type 2 diabetes may possibly be prevented or delayed with a healthful lifestyle – eating nutritious foods and being physically active.

Healthful eating is important for managing diabetes. A healthful meal plan includes:

- Vegetables, fruits, whole grains and fat-free or low-fat milk products.
- Seafood, poultry, lean meats, eggs, beans and nuts.

It's important to decrease intake of sodium (salt), added sugars and saturated fats found in animal products like cheese, fatty meats, whole milk and butter. Also, avoid trans fats, which often are found in cakes, cookies, stick margarines and fried foods.

Tips from the American Diabetes Association for making healthful food choices include:

- Eat lots of vegetables and fruits. Try picking from the rainbow of colors available to maximize variety. Eat nonstarchy vegetables such as spinach, carrots, broccoli or green beans with meals.
- Choose whole grain foods over processed grain products. Try brown rice with stir-fry or whole-wheat spaghetti with pasta sauce.
- Include dried beans (like kidney or pinto beans) and lentils in meals.
- Include fish in meals two to three times a week.
- Choose lean meats like cuts of beef and pork that end in "loin," such as pork loin and sirloin.
- Remove the skin from chicken and turkey.
- Choose nonfat dairy products, such as skim milk, nonfat yogurt and nonfat cheese.
- Drink water and calorie-free "diet" drinks instead of regular soda, fruit punch, sweet tea and other sugar-sweetened drinks.

- Choose liquid oils for cooking instead of solid fats that can be high in saturated and trans fats.
- Remember that fats are high in calories. If you're trying to lose weight, watch your portion sizes of added fats.
- Cut back on high-calorie snack foods and desserts like chips, cookies, cakes, and full-fat ice cream.
- Watch portion sizes. Even eating too much of healthful foods can lead to weight gain.

Regular physical activity is important for everyone, especially people with diabetes. Exercise helps control weight, increase circulation, decrease stress and reduce the risk for heart disease and strokes by lowering blood pressure and cholesterol.

For people with diabetes, exercise can do even more. It can help keep blood glucose levels in the normal range and can go a long way toward preventing the complications associated with diabetes.

To get the health benefits of physical activity, do a combination of aerobic and muscle-strengthening activities. Aerobic activities make you breathe harder and cause your heart to beat faster (like brisk walking). Muscle-strengthening activities make your muscles stronger (like lifting weights). Start at a comfortable level and gradually increase activity levels and times.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, adults gain substantial health benefits from two and a half hours a week (30 minutes per day) of moderate intensity aerobic physical activity or one hour and 15 minutes of vigorous physical activity. If you have diabetes, talk with your doctor about what type and how much exercise is right for you.

The LSU AgCenter's Diabetes Education Awareness Recommendations Program and Smart Portions Healthy Weight Program provide information on healthful eating and recommendations on physical activity and lifestyle habits. For information about these programs or about eating healthfully using MyPyramid, contact an LSU AgCenter Extension Service agent in your parish or visit www.LSUAgCenter.com.

**Visit our website: www.LSUAgCenter.com
November 2011**

Louisiana State University Agricultural Center
William R. Richardson, Chancellor
Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station
John S. Russin, Vice Chancellor and Director
Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service
Paul D. Coreil, Vice Chancellor and Director

The LSU AgCenter is a statewide campus of the LSU System and provides equal opportunities in programs and employment

This material was partially funded by USDA's Food Stamp program. The Food Stamp program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income.

To find out more, contact your parish agent.