

# AMERICAN DIABETES ALERT DAY

Tuesday, March 27, 2006



(Link Logo to <http://www.diabetes.org/communityprograms-and-localevents/americandiabetesalert.jsp>)

The National Medical Association (NMA), as the nation's largest and only organization representing physicians of African descent, is committed to the education of its constituents and the patients they serve. As part of continuing efforts of the National Diabetes Education Program (NDEP) (link to <http://www.ndep.nih.gov/>) grant to promote diabetes education to NMA members, the **NMA Diabetes Education Program** (Link to the page below) calls NMA members attention to American Diabetes Alert Day. (link to <http://www.diabetes.org/communityprograms-and-localevents/americandiabetesalert.jsp>) This event is an annual, one-day call-to-action held on the fourth Tuesday of March for people to find out if they are at risk for type 2 diabetes or may have "pre-diabetes."

In many cases, individuals have pre-diabetes before type 2 diabetes is developed. The Alert's goal is to raise the awareness that diabetes is serious, that you can have diabetes and not even know it, and that taking the **RISK TEST** (<http://www.diabetes.org/risk-test.jsp>) is an easy way to find out if you are at risk for diabetes.

#### ***These are the things to KNOW:***

##### **What is diabetes?**

- Diabetes means that your blood glucose (sugar) is too high.
- 20.8 million children and adults in the United States, or 7% of the population, have diabetes
- 14.6 million are estimated to have been diagnosed with diabetes
- 6.2 million people (or nearly one-third) are unaware that they have the disease

##### **What is pre-diabetes?**

- Pre-diabetes is associated with blood glucose levels that are higher than normal but not yet high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes.
- 41 million people in the United States, ages 40 to 74, who have pre-diabetes

##### **Could you have diabetes?**

Diabetes is a silent disease. You could have it for years and never know.

##### **Who is at risk for diabetes?**

Your risk for diabetes increases as you get older, gain too much weight, or if you do not stay active.

##### **Don't wait for the signs**

Most people with diabetes do not notice any symptoms.

##### **What can your patients do?**

You can do things now to lower your risk for diabetes.

##### **What can NMA physicians do?**

As a NMA physician, ALERT members, patients, family, and friends regarding the statistics, prevention measures, and treatment guidelines, as well as other information about clinical trials, research results, and medications related to diabetes and its risk.

The NMA makes every effort to provide members and their patients with the most current and accurate information about diabetes. The **American Diabetes Association** (Link to <http://www.diabetes.org/home.jsp>) and the **NDEP Better Care Diabetes** (Link to <http://www.betterdiabetescare.nih.gov/>) websites are two resources that provides educational materials, links, and the latest treatment guidelines for physicians to better manage their diabetes patients and to identify those patients with pre-diabetes.

##### **Contact Us**

If family members suffer from diabetes and do not have a physician and are having trouble locating someone who specializes in diabetes, through the Association's Physician Locator Service, the NMA can refer individuals to one of its practicing members across the nation and in the Caribbean. For more information, simply call toll-free information line at 1-888-ABT-HLTH or go to the NMA website at [www.nmanet.org](http://www.nmanet.org)

##### **Disclaimer**

The information maintained on this site is not intended as a substitute of any kind for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Please speak to your health care professional before taking any medicine or beginning or discontinuing any course of treatment.

**Data Source:** 1999-2002 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) estimates of total prevalence (both diagnosed and undiagnosed) projected to 2005 and 2001-2003 National Health Interview Survey estimates projected to year 2005. ([National Diabetes Fact sheet, 2005](#))

## NDEP/NMA DIABETES PROGRAM

### The Problem

According to the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases of the National Institute of Health (NIH), 20.8 million people in the United States, or 7% of the population, have diabetes. An estimated 14.6 million have been diagnosed, unfortunately 6.2 million people (or nearly one-third) are unaware that they have the disease. For African Americans, approximately 3.2 million ages 20 years and older (or 13.3%) have diabetes, with one-third being undiagnosed. Regarding risk, African Americans are 1.8 times as likely to have diabetes as non-Hispanic whites of the same age. Likewise, they are more likely to experience complications, such as kidney disease and amputations, compared to non-Hispanic white counterparts with diabetes. Death rates for those with diabetes are 27 percent higher in African Americans compared to whites.

### Description of the Program

In response to these data, the National Medical Association (NMA) successfully competed for a five-year CDC/NIH grant to address diabetes and health-related problems in African Americans. NMA will engage in a number of educational activities targeting the general public, patients with Type 2 Diabetes, and physicians. The NMA Diabetes Outreach and Education Program will increase awareness about diabetes in the general public and improve treatment outcome of the patients of selected NMA physicians. Hence, the collective effort of this project will contribute to decreasing the numbers of those diagnosed with the disease. The goal of the NMA program is consistent with that of the National Diabetes Education Program (NDEP) to reduce illnesses and deaths associated with diabetes and its complications. Effectively implementing this program will strengthen the capacity of NMA to reduce the disproportionate burden of diabetes among African Americans.

### About the NDEP

Introduced to the diabetes community in June 1997, the NDEP is a federally funded initiative that is jointly sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases of the NIH and the Division of Diabetes Translation of the CDC. The NDEP involves public and private partners whose purpose is to improve treatment and outcomes for people with diabetes, to promote early diagnosis, and to prevent the onset of diabetes. The program's sponsoring agencies provide a firm basis of credibility, commitment, resources, and links to state and local public health agencies nationwide. The participation of the full range of diabetes organizations and the program's partnership with over 200 health professionals, community, consumer groups, and private sector organizations provide an opportunity for a wide dissemination of the NDEP's messages and continued growth. The NDEP program has made substantial progress in carrying out its program strategies. Major accomplishments include the development of:

- Guiding principles for diabetes care;
- A strong partnership network;
- A public education campaign to increase awareness of the importance of diabetes control, with special emphasis on racial and ethnic populations;
- The first national, multicultural public education campaign on diabetes prevention;
- Tools and resources for people with (or at risk for) diabetes, health care providers, employers, and other partners; and
- Initiatives to improve access to quality health care services.

To obtain more information about **NMA Diabetes Education Program** and the NDEP and its many resources, visit the website at <http://www.nmanet.org/> and <http://www.ndep.nih.gov/>. Also visit the NDEP Better Diabetes Care website at <http://www.betterdiabetescare.nih.gov/>. This site provides information, models, links, resources and tools to help health care professionals prevent and treat diabetes in the patients they serve.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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