

Diabetes



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DIABETES IN THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Diabetes is a condition in which the body fails to produce insulin or does not properly use it. If left untreated, high levels of blood sugar (glucose) can result in complications, such as blindness, heart attacks, strokes, kidney failure, and limb amputations.

Important facts about diabetes:

- 7th leading cause of death by disease.
- 23.6 million people, or 7.8% of the population, in the U.S. have diabetes.
- An estimated 17.9 million have been diagnosed, unfortunately 5.7 million (or nearly 25% of total estimated) are unaware that they have the disease.
- Type 2 diabetes accounts for 90%–95% all diagnosed cases of diabetes.
- 84% of all deaths in people 65 years of age and older is caused by heart disease and stroke.
- 57 million people, ages 20 years or older, have “pre-diabetes” or high blood sugar levels that are higher than normal, but not yet high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes.

DIABETES IN AFRICAN AMERICANS

- About 3.7 million people, 20 years of age and older, have diabetes.
- African Americans experience higher complications, such as kidney disease and amputations, compared to non-Hispanic whites with diabetes.
 - Blindness: Almost 50% as likely to develop diabetic retinopathy as non-Hispanic whites.
 - Kidney Disease: African Americans are 2.6 to 5.6 times as likely to suffer from kidney disease.
 - Amputations: African Americans are 2.7 times as likely to suffer from lower-limb amputations.

RISK FACTORS

The risk of developing type 2 diabetes increases with the number of risk factors you have. The following conditions increase the risk:

- Over age 45
- African American descent
- Parent, brother, or sister with diabetes
- Diabetes during pregnancy
- History of having a baby weighing over 9 lbs.
- High blood pressure
- Physical inactivity
- Overweight or obesity
- High cholesterol
- High triglycerides



WAYS TO REDUCE THE RISK OF DIABETES

- Weight loss (if you are overweight)
- Physical activity for 30 minutes a day, 3-5 days a week (e.g., walk and take the stairs).
- Balanced diet consisting of low-fat foods, vegetables, and whole grains and cereals.