

# Obesity – A Bad Habit That Causes Diabetes

## NMA Diabetes Education Program

### Focuses on Obesity

#### The Rise of Obesity

Over the past 30 years, there has been a significant increase in obesity within the United States. Reasons for this rise are poor diets and sedentary lifestyle.<sup>1</sup>

Statistics reported in the New England Journal of Medicine indicate that a person's chances of becoming obese rises 57 percent if a friend was obese, 40 percent if a sibling was obese and 37 percent if the spouse was obese.<sup>2</sup> This information clearly shows that being obese is a choice of adopting bad habits that ultimately causes diabetes and other health related issues.

#### Obesity's Statistical Correlation to Diabetes

Approximately 300,000 deaths each year in the United States may be attributable to obesity.<sup>3</sup> According to the Surgeon General's report, 61% of adults are overweight or obese thus putting them at risk for heart disease, diabetes, stroke, arthritis and depression.<sup>4</sup> Diabetes is an epidemic within the African American community. 3.2 million people aged 20 years and older (or 13.3% of all African Americans have diabetes.<sup>5</sup> Statistics also indicate that African Americans experience higher complications from diabetes such as blindness, kidney disease and amputations than non-Hispanic whites with diabetes.<sup>5</sup>

According the ADA, Type 2 diabetes is at epidemic proportions in the United States, in large due to the prevalence of obesity in America.<sup>6</sup> The incidence of diabetes for those 40 to 74 years of age increased 38 percent between 1976 and 1994. Today, 80 percent of people with Type 2 diabetes are overweight.<sup>7</sup>

According to Trust for America's Health [\[hyperlinkhttp://healthyamericans.org/\]](http://healthyamericans.org/) The rates of obesity and overweight are continuing to rise.<sup>8</sup> Statistics reveal that southern states have the highest rates of diabetes and hypertension, two major health conditions that are related to obesity.<sup>8</sup> Specifically, looking at the states of the Coalitions participating in the NMA Diabetes Education Program, the obesity percentages are as follows:<sup>7</sup> Georgia (Atlanta) - 24.7%; Texas (Houston) - 25.8%; Indiana (Indianapolis) - 25.5%; California (Los Angeles) - 22.2%; Arkansas (Pine Bluff) - 26.1%; and the District of Columbia - 22.5%.

#### Combating Obesity – How To

The National Diabetes Education Program (NDEP), sponsored jointly by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has recommended four simple steps on their information sheet – [More than 50 Ways to Prevent Diabetes](http://ndep.nih.gov/campaigns/SmallSteps/SmallSteps_50ways.htm) [\[hyperlink http://ndep.nih.gov/campaigns/SmallSteps/SmallSteps\\_50ways.htm\]](http://ndep.nih.gov/campaigns/SmallSteps/SmallSteps_50ways.htm) – to reduce weight:

1. Eat less by reducing portion sizes.
2. Add more physical activity.
3. Make healthier food choices.
4. Nurture the mind, body and soul.

The United States Department of Agriculture offers a personalized eating plan called [MyPyramid Plan](http://www.mypyramid.gov) [hyperlink [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov)]. This tool may be helpful to patients when setting goals. The American Council on Exercise recommends 60 minutes of exercise every day to reduce weight.<sup>9</sup> Another helpful resource is [The Portion Plate](http://www.theportionplate.com) [hyperlink [www.theportionplate.com](http://www.theportionplate.com)] which provides a visual guide for the amount of food that a person should place on their plates.

## The Diabetes Education Program

The NMA Diabetes Education Program, funded by a five-year cooperative agreement from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is in the third year of grant activities. To address the disproportionate prevalence of diabetes in the Black community, the program has six coalition sites conducting diabetes outreach and education in their respective communities. The coalition cities are Atlanta, Houston, Indianapolis, Los Angeles, Pine Bluff (Arkansas), and Washington (District of Columbia) (*Objective #1*). The Program continues to focus on three educational objectives including:

- Provide outreach, such as risk assessments, community workshops, and media campaigns (*Objective #2*).
- Educate diabetes patients about preventive behaviors, as well as healthy disciplines to maintain good health while affected by the disease (*Objective #3*).
- Educate NMA physicians (*Objective #4*).

## Contact Us

The NMA Diabetes Education Program is supervised by Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H., Principal Investigator; Ivonne Fuller Bertrand, N.R.P.P., M.P.A., Program Administrator; and Roslyn A. Douglas, M.A., Program Coordinator. For information or to assist with this initiative, contact [rdouglas@nmanet.org](mailto:rdouglas@nmanet.org).

Visit the new NMA Diabetes Education Program website!

[www.nmadiabetesnet.org](http://www.nmadiabetesnet.org)

## Sources

1. Bailey, E. J, (2007). Food Choice and obesity in Black America: Creating a New Cultural Diet. JNMA, 99(3):298.
2. Associated Press. (2007, July 26). Study: Obesity Is ‘Contagious’ – Researchers find weight gain spreads within social networks. Washington DC, Express, p. 1.
3. Retrieved from Surgeon General’s web site, July 31, 2007, at [http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/topics/obesity/calltoaction/fact\\_whatcanyoudo.htm](http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/topics/obesity/calltoaction/fact_whatcanyoudo.htm).
4. Bertand, Dequendre, (2002) Obesity Rates Skyrocketing. JNMA 94(4):A12.
5. American Diabetes Association (ADA). Total prevalence of diabetes by race/ethnicity. Retrieved from the ADA website on June 25, 2006, at <http://diabetes.org/diabetes-statistics/prevalence.jsp>.
6. Anderson-Parrado, Patricia. Type II diabetes and obesity: an all-too-common combination. Better Nutrition. April, 1998. Retrieved online on August 28, 2007, at [http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m0FKA/is\\_n4\\_v60/ai\\_20471628](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0FKA/is_n4_v60/ai_20471628).
7. Retrieved from Massachusetts General Hospital, News & Information’s web site, August 28, 2007 at <http://www.massgeneral.org/news/releases/012202diabetesstudy.htm>
8. Retrieved from Trust for America’s Health’s web site, August 28, 2007 at <http://healthyamericans.org/reports/obesity2006/release.php?StateID=DC>
9. Retrieved from the American Council on Exercise’s web site, July 31, 2007, at [www.acefitness.org/media/media\\_display.aspx?NewsID=143](http://www.acefitness.org/media/media_display.aspx?NewsID=143).