

Fast Facts About Diabetes and Its Impact

Epidemic Proportions

- **Nearly 24 million people in the U.S. had diabetes** in 2007, 24 percent of whom were undiagnosed, according to the American Diabetes Association (ADA).
 - Another estimated 57 million, or 26 percent of the adult population, are considered pre-diabetic.
- **Diagnoses of people with diabetes increased by 13.5 percent** between 2005 and 2007, with 1.6 million new cases of diabetes among adults reported in 2007 alone, according to the ADA.
- **Progression to diabetes among those with prediabetes is not inevitable.** Research shows that a typical pre-diabetic person who reduces body weight by 7 percent by adopting better eating habits or walking 150 minutes per week reduces the risk of becoming diabetic by 58 percent.

The Toll

- **Sixty percent of diabetics do not follow their physician's advice** on how to manage their disease, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
 - *This suggests that there is great room for improvement in quality of life and health care outcomes that will lead to reduced costs to employers and the U.S. economy.*
- **Properly managing diabetes can help reduce the risk of serious, sometimes life-threatening complications;** however far too many people are not aware that they have diabetes until they develop one of its complications.
- **The risk for death among people with diabetes is about twice that of people without diabetes** of similar age, the ADA says.
 - Adults with diabetes have heart disease death rates about 2 to 4 times higher than adults without diabetes.
 - The risk for stroke among diabetics is 2 to 4 times higher and the risk of death from stroke is 2.8 times higher than among non-diabetics.
 - Diabetes is the leading cause of new cases of blindness among adults aged 20-74 and is the leading cause of kidney failure.

Potential Cost Savings

- **The cost of diabetes to the U.S. economy has increased 32 percent since 2002**, or \$8 billion a year, reaching \$174 billion in 2007, according to estimates from the ADA.
- According to UnitedHealthcare studies, the average annual cost for treating diabetics and pre-diabetics:

TYPE OF PATIENT	COST
Pre-Diabetic	\$5,000
Undiagnosed Diabetic	\$12,000
Diabetic Without Complications	\$10,000
Diabetic With Complications	\$30,000

- **One out of every five health care dollars is spent caring for someone with diagnosed diabetes**, while one in 10 health care dollars is attributed directly to diabetes, according to the ADA.
- **Companies that self-insure¹ through UnitedHealthcare pay on average a staggering 13 times more per year in costs for an employee with diabetes** than for a “healthy” employee, or \$22,512 a year compared with \$1,721 per year, according to UnitedHealthcare data.
- **Ensuring quality diabetes care is a cost-effective strategy** for employers, according to research from the National Business Coalition on Health (NBCH), which has a membership of over 60 employer-led coalitions, representing over 10,000 employers and approximately 34 million employees and their dependents.
- According to the CDC, **patient education on self-managing diabetes prevents hospitalizations and for every \$1 spent on these programs, health care spending is cut by \$8.76.**
 - At the same time, blood sugar control lowers the rate of absenteeism by one percentage point, while poor blood sugar control increases absenteeism by 8 percent.

African Americans and Diabetes

- **African Americans are almost twice as likely to have diabetes** as non-Hispanic whites of the same age, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- Approximately 2.7 million or 11.4% of all African Americans aged 20 years or older have diabetes. However, **one-third of them do not know it** (ADA).
- According to the ADA, African Americans experience **higher rates of at least four serious complications** of diabetes: cardiovascular disease, blindness, amputation and end stage renal disease (kidney failure).
 - In fact, African Americans are almost **50% more likely than non-Hispanic whites** to develop diabetic retinopathy, which is an eye disease that can lead to blindness.

Women and Diabetes

- **The burden of diabetes on women is unique**, because the disease can affect both mothers and their unborn children (ADA).
- For women who do not currently have diabetes, **pregnancy brings the risk of gestational diabetes** (ADA).
 - Gestational diabetes develops in 2% to 5% of all pregnancies but disappears when a pregnancy is over (ADA).
 - Women who have had gestational diabetes or have given birth to a baby weighting more than 9 pounds are at an **increased risk for developing type 2 diabetes later in life** (ADA).
- The prevalence of diabetes is at least **2-4 times higher** among African American, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian, and Asian/Pacific Islander women than among white women (ADA).

¹ *Self-insured plans generally are used only by larger employers, with claims administered by an insurance company. The employer itself is responsible for paying covered health care costs for participating employees and family members.*

About Diabetes

- **Diabetes** is a group of diseases marked by high levels of blood glucose resulting from defects in insulin production, insulin action, or both.
 - Diabetes can lead to serious complications and premature death, but people with diabetes can take steps to control the disease and lower the risk of complications.
- **Type 1 diabetes**, previously known as insulin-dependent diabetes or juvenile-onset diabetes, develops when the body's immune system destroys pancreatic beta cells, the only cells in the body that make the hormone insulin that regulates blood glucose.
 - This form of diabetes usually strikes children and young adults.
 - In adults, type 1 diabetes accounts for 5 to 10 percent of all diagnosed cases of diabetes.
- **Type 2 diabetes**, previously known as non-insulin-dependent diabetes or adult-onset diabetes, is associated with older age, obesity, family history of diabetes, history of gestational diabetes, impaired glucose metabolism, physical inactivity, and race/ethnicity
 - Type 2 diabetes accounts for about **90 to 95 percent** of all diagnosed cases of diabetes.
- **Prediabetes** is a condition in which individuals have blood glucose levels higher than normal but not high enough to be classified as diabetes.
 - People with pre-diabetes have an increased risk of developing type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and stroke.

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