



HEALTH AWARENESS

November 2023

AMERICAN DIABETES MONTH

American Diabetes Month is observed every November to raise awareness about diabetes, a chronic medical condition with no cure that affects millions of people worldwide. The goal of this month-long campaign is to educate the public about diabetes, its risk factors, prevention efforts, proper management, and the importance of early diagnosis. Diabetes is a group of metabolic diseases characterized by high blood sugar, and it comes in different forms, with the most common being type 1 and type 2 diabetes.

During American Diabetes Month, various organizations, healthcare providers, and individuals engage in activities and initiatives to promote understanding and action related to diabetes. Some common activities associated with this observance include:

SCREENING AND TESTING: Some healthcare facilities offer free or discounted diabetes screenings, making it easier for people to get tested for diabetes or prediabetes.

FUNDRAISING: Many organizations and charities that support diabetes research and patient care use this month as an opportunity to raise funds for their activities.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: Local communities often organize events such as health fairs, walks, and runs to connect individuals and those impacted by diabetes. Social media and other online platforms are also used to share information, personal stories, and resources.

WEAR BLUE: The color blue is often associated with diabetes awareness. People may wear blue clothing or accessories to show support.

WHAT IS DIABETES

Diabetes is a chronic medical condition that occurs when your blood sugar levels are consistently too high. Blood glucose is the primary source of energy for your body, and it comes from the food you eat. However, in order for glucose to enter your cells and be used as energy, it requires a hormone called insulin, which is produced by the pancreas.

There are several types of diabetes, but the two most common ones are:

TYPE 1 DIABETES: In this form of diabetes, the immune system mistakenly attacks and destroys the insulin-producing cells in the pancreas. As a result, the body is unable to produce insulin, and

individuals with type 1 require lifelong insulin therapy. This type is typically diagnosed in childhood or adolescence and is not preventable.

TYPE 2 DIABETES: Type 2 is characterized by the body's resistance to insulin and the pancreas's inability to produce enough insulin to maintain normal blood sugar levels. It is often associated with lifestyle factors such as obesity, a sedentary lifestyle, and poor dietary choices. Type 2 diabetes can often be managed through lifestyle changes, such as a healthy diet and increased physical activity, but medication or insulin therapy may be necessary in some cases.



There is also a condition called gestational diabetes that can occur during pregnancy. It affects blood sugar levels in pregnant women who did not previously have diabetes. It usually goes away after giving birth but may increase the risk of developing type 2 in the future.

Uncontrolled diabetes can lead to various health complications, including heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, nerve damage, eye problems, and circulation issues. Regular monitoring of blood glucose levels, a healthy lifestyle, and proper medical management are crucial for individuals with diabetes to lead a healthy and active life.

COMMON WARNING SIGNS:

- Blurred vision
- Excessive thirst
- Unintentional weight loss
- Frequent urination
- Lack of energy
- Slow healing wounds
- Frequent infections
- Tingling or numbness in hands and feet

RISK FACTORS FOR TYPE 2 DIABETES:

- A family history of diabetes
- Unhealthy eating habits
- Lack of physical activity
- Being overweight
- Age
- High blood pressure
- Ethnicity
- Poor nutrition during pregnancy

It is important to note that diabetes is a widespread and fast-growing health concern, and raising awareness about the condition and its prevention is a key focus during events like American Diabetes Month. If you suspect you have diabetes or are at risk, it is essential to consult with a healthcare professional for diagnosis, treatment, and management.

According to the International Diabetes Federation, 1 in 10 adults worldwide have diabetes. Over 90% have type 2 diabetes. Close to half are not yet diagnosed. In many cases, type 2 diabetes and its complications can be delayed or prevented by adopting and maintaining healthy habits.



643 Million
Adults predicted to be living with diabetes by 2030



3 in 4
People with diabetes live in low and middle-income countries



Almost 1 in 2
Adults living with diabetes are undiagnosed

BENEFITS CORNER

It is open enrollment season! This annual period provides the opportunity to enroll in or adjust your current benefit plan. Taking place October 1 - November 30, 2023, open enrollment can apply to benefits such as health insurance, life insurance, and savings plans. If you miss the open enrollment period, you will have to wait until the next period to make any changes.

New ID cards will be provided to everyone, including covered dependents, for the 2024 calendar year whether changes were made or not to existing plans. For this reason, please confirm your current mailing address on file with your HR department.

Health plan deductibles, out of pocket maximums, and prescription deductibles will start over at \$0 on January 1, 2024.

Open enrollment is also a good time to update beneficiary information to reflect changes in life circumstances such as marriages, divorces, births, and deaths. Ensure designations are up-to-date and reflect your current wishes.

