

Diabetes & You

Get Tested For Diabetes

(NAPSA)—The number of U.S. adults with diabetes continues to rise. Despite efforts to raise awareness of the problem, a new study shows that about a third of adults with diabetes still don't know they have it.

Diabetes is a group of diseases marked by high levels of glucose, a type of sugar in the blood. Persistent high levels can lead to blindness, kidney failure, amputations, heart disease and stroke.

Researchers at the National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention analyzed data from a national sample of U.S. adults 20 years old and over. Participants were interviewed in their homes and given a physical exam with a blood test, including a glucose reading taken after an overnight fast.

The researchers found that the prevalence of diagnosed diabetes rose from about 5.1 percent in the years 1988-1994 to 6.5 percent in 1999-2002. About 2.8 percent, a third of those who have diabetes, don't even know they have it. The study also found that about a quarter of U.S. adults have a form of pre-diabetes, a condition in which your blood glucose level is higher than normal but not high enough for a diagnosis of diabetes. People with pre-diabetes have an increased risk for developing type 2 diabetes (the most common form of diabetes), heart disease and stroke.

Knowing whether you have pre-diabetes or type 2 diabetes is an



important first step. If you have pre-diabetes, you may be able to prevent or delay type 2 diabetes by cutting calories and increasing your physical activity to lose a modest amount of weight. If you have diabetes, controlling your blood glucose, blood pressure and cholesterol will prevent or delay the complications of diabetes.

If you're over 45, ask your health care provider about testing for pre-diabetes or diabetes. If you're younger than 45, ask about testing if you're overweight and have another risk factor such as a family history of diabetes, high blood pressure or if you're a member of a high-risk ethnic population.

For more information, visit the National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse at www.diabetes.niddk.nih.gov or call (800) 860-8747. —Adapted from *NIH News in Health*, a publication of the National Institutes of Health (newsinhealth.nih.gov).