

Understanding And Managing Type 2 Diabetes

(NAPSA)—Diabetes is the sixth leading cause of death in the United States and affects nearly 17 million people. Yet, nearly six million Americans are unaware they even have it.

Type 2 diabetes accounts for 90 to 95 percent of all diagnosed cases of diabetes and is highly associated with a family history, older age, obesity, and ethnicity. African-Americans, Hispanics and Native Americans are at higher risks of developing diabetes. In addition, physicians are seeing more and more overweight children with type 2 diabetes—a disease that was once called “adult-onset diabetes.”

“Eighty percent of people with type 2 diabetes are overweight,” said Era Khurana, MD, FCAP, a pathologist in Syosset, N.Y. “Consequently, as the rate of obesity has risen in children, so has the number of children who are diagnosed with type 2 diabetes.”

Diabetes is a metabolic disease caused by an imbalance of glucose, the body’s main source of energy. Glucose enters cells guided by insulin—a hormone secreted by the pancreas. With diabetes either too much or too little insulin is produced. As a result, glucose is removed from the body through urine, causing the body to lose energy.

Dr. Khurana says it often goes undiagnosed because the disease develops slowly and many people with diabetes fail to recognize the symptoms. “Warning signs like excessive thirst, unexplained weight gain or loss, or flu-like signs including fatigue are often thought by patients to be something else, and they don’t seek medical attention,” she explained.

A diagnosis of diabetes also puts you at risk for other illnesses

Check Diabetes Early

- Maintain a healthy weight and exercise 30 minutes a day.
- Talk to your physician if you experience unusual weight changes, excessive thirst or flu-like symptoms.
- Get regular diabetes screening tests—for a free reminder, visit www.MyHealthTestReminder.com.



such as heart disease and hypertension. Uncontrolled diabetes can lead to kidney failure, amputation, blindness or even death.

The College of American Pathologists recommends having a fasting glucose test at age 45. If diabetes is not detected, the test probably does not have to be repeated for three years. However, Dr. Khurana cautions that your physician may wish to test you earlier or more frequently based on your risk factors.

To test for diabetes, blood is drawn and sent to a medical laboratory for analysis. A pathologist, a physician who treats patients through laboratory medicine, will report your blood glucose levels to your doctor for evaluation. A confirmed diagnosis is made after two positive tests, with the second test taken on a different day.

A commitment to managing diabetes is essential. Proper diet and exercise combined with a yearly physical will facilitate self-care. Avoid alcohol; don’t smoke; monitor blood pressure; and take care to avoid infections on the feet and hands.

For more information about diabetes and to register for a free e-mail reminder to schedule vital health screenings for diabetes and other conditions visit www.MyHealthTestReminder.com.