

Diabetes & You

Diabetes: Know The Heart Part

(NAPSA)—Diabetes affects over 17 million Americans. And the numbers continue to grow at an alarming rate. Along with complications such as blindness and limb loss, people with diabetes are also at an increased risk for heart disease—the leading cause of diabetes-related deaths. In fact, people with type II diabetes are at a two to four times greater risk for heart disease than the general population. The reality is that a diagnosis of diabetes puts an individual at the same level of risk for a heart attack as a person without diabetes who has already had a heart attack.

Knowledge is the first line of defense against diabetes and heart disease. A Diabetes Educator or your doctor can help you assess your risk factors. If you have diabetes, it's important to know that managing your risks for heart attack and stroke are very important, just like managing your blood sugar.

The American Association of Diabetes Educators (AADE) and Merck & Co., Inc. recently launched *Diabetes: Know The Heart Part*, a public education campaign designed to alert Americans to the link between diabetes, high cholesterol and heart disease. Explains Virginia Zamudio, RN, MSN, CDE, CPT, president-elect of AADE, "Once you know the facts about diabetes and heart dis-

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**—Virginia Zamudio,
president-elect, AADE**



ease, you'll understand how to manage your risk. The real problem is that the link between diabetes and heart disease is often misunderstood, underestimated or ignored. One survey found that more than two-thirds of people with diabetes are unaware they face an increased risk of heart attack and stroke."

Along with managing your blood sugar, the AADE recommends seeing your doctor to discuss managing your risk for heart attack and stroke. If medication is indicated, your doctor will discuss this with you. Also, eat foods low in fat and cholesterol, including lots of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Exercise regularly according to your doctor's guidelines. And if you smoke, stop: cigarette smoking increases your risk of heart disease.

To learn more about diabetes and your risks for heart disease, call 1-800-224-4089 to receive a free *Diabetes: Know The Heart Part* brochure with helpful information on diabetes and heart disease. You can also visit: www.diabeteseducator.com.