

# Health Bulletin



## Many Americans With Diabetes May Unknowingly Suffer From Anemia

(NAPSA)—Learning to recognize the warning signs of anemia could be a lifesaver—especially for people who have diabetes.

Anemia in diabetes patients may be one of the earliest signs of chronic kidney disease, a serious complication known as diabetic nephropathy. More than one-fifth of the estimated 16 million Americans with diabetes are at risk for diabetic nephropathy.

Anemia is an under-treated and under-recognized condition among diabetics that can lead to enlargement of part of the heart, a potentially fatal condition known as left ventricular hypertrophy.

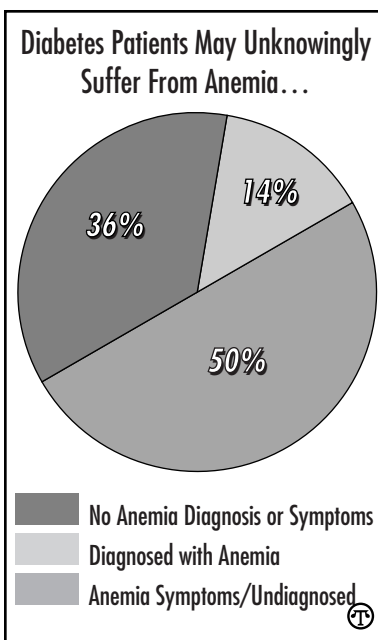
According to a recent survey conducted by Roper Starch Worldwide and sponsored by Amgen, only one-quarter (26 percent) of the 504 diabetics surveyed were aware that they are at risk for anemia, and only 14 percent of them said they had been diagnosed with the condition.

Among the 86 percent who had not yet been diagnosed with anemia, however, more than half (58 percent) indicated that they suffer from one or more symptoms often associated with anemia.

These symptoms can include extreme fatigue, a rapid heartbeat, shortness of breath, chest pain, difficulty with concentration, dizziness, fainting and difficulty in sleeping.

These warning signs of anemia in diabetics are subtle and can easily be overlooked.

“Anemia is a serious condition for people with diabetes, particu-



**Half of the patients surveyed had one or more anemia symptoms (e.g., fatigue, dizziness, rapid heartbeat, or shortness of breath), but had not been diagnosed.**

larly given anemia's connection to chronic kidney disease," said Lance A. Sloan, MD, FACE, medical director of the Henderson Kidney Center and H.C. Polk, Jr. Regional Diabetes Center. "This survey shows that we need to educate physicians and patients about the relationship between diabetes, anemia and chronic kidney disease, and highlights the need for early identification and treatment."

While the majority of survey

respondents were aware of such diabetes complications as kidney disease (86 percent), heart disease (77 percent), and loss of eyesight (87 percent), only one quarter (26 percent) were aware they could be at serious risk for anemia.

While 58 percent suffered from one or more of the symptoms of anemia, two-thirds attributed their symptoms to other causes such as their diabetes (69 percent) or to growing older.

"Anemia seriously undermines not only a patient's health but also diminishes the quality of that person's life," said Sloan. "It's important that people understand that there are options that can improve their overall health and the quality of their daily lives."

Anemia is characterized by a decrease in the body's total number of red blood cells (RBCs), and occurs when there are not enough RBCs to carry energy-fueling oxygen from the lungs to the body's tissues and organs to support normal functioning.

Given that anemia can signal the presence of chronic kidney disease, it is important that doctors, nurses and diabetes patients test for anemia on a regular basis.

For more information about anemia and how it's treated, consult your doctor or visit the American Diabetes Association website, [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org), the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website, [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov), the National Anemia Awareness Campaign's homepage at [www.anemia.com](http://www.anemia.com), or Amgen's website, [www.amgen.com](http://www.amgen.com).