

## Ignoring The Risk Of Weight And Diabetes

(NAPS)—An estimated 61 percent of the U.S. population is overweight, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Physicians report that one of the primary risks associated with being overweight is type 2 diabetes, however a new survey finds that most Americans don't realize they are at risk for developing this disease.

Eighty percent of people surveyed by Yankelovich Partners, Inc., have never discussed type 2 diabetes with their doctor and 67 percent say they are not concerned about developing the disease.

"These survey results are alarming because they show that Americans are not making the connection between being overweight and developing type 2 diabetes," said Dr. Steven B. Heymsfield, Deputy Director of the New York Obesity Research Center at St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital Center in New York.

The CDC has found that the incidence of type 2 diabetes has increased rapidly throughout the 1990s across all regions and demographic groups. In addition, the prevalence of being severely overweight has increased 57 percent in the last decade, suggesting that further increases in the prevalence of type 2 diabetes can be expected.

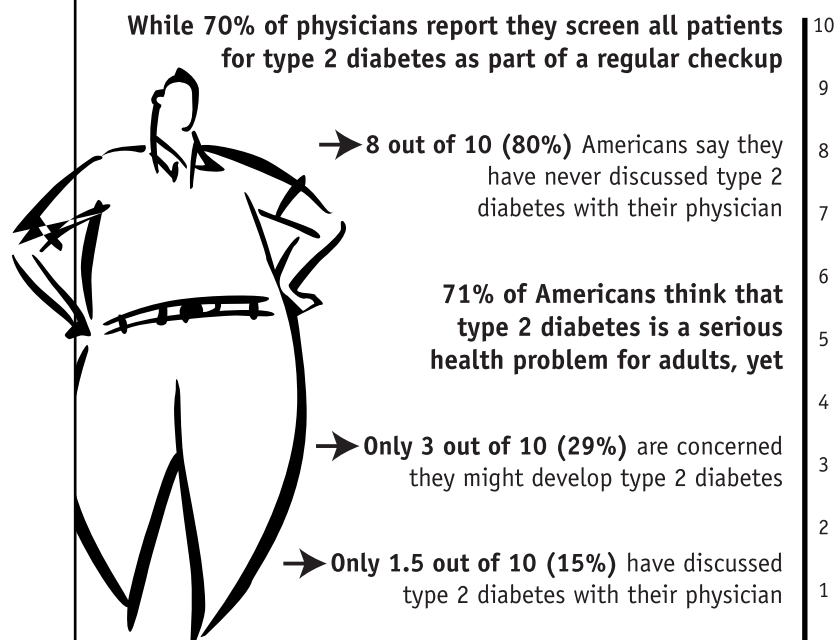
Sixty percent of physicians sur-

veyed cited increased risk of type 2 diabetes as the number one reason they are concerned about America's escalating weight problem. Physicians also identified weight loss as one of the most important ways to help avoid type 2 diabetes. Health risks associated with untreated type 2 diabetes include eye disorders, neural disorders, chronic kidney failure and increased likelihood of developing atherosclerosis.

"Doctors need to stress the importance of weight management in the treatment of type 2 diabetes," said Dr. Heymsfield, who conducted a study that appeared in the *Archives of Internal Medicine* which concluded that the prescription weight loss medication Xenical (orlistat) can help to reverse high blood sugar and can even prevent type 2 diabetes in obese individuals. He says that weight loss with Xenical may be an important addition to dietary and lifestyle changes in reducing the risk of diabetes.

Even small amounts of weight loss can significantly prevent the onset of diseases like diabetes. Physicians can help individuals reach and maintain a healthy weight by recommending different options including changes in diet, lifestyle and prescription medication.

### Diabetes and Obesity: Ignoring an Epidemic



Source: Yankelovich Partners, Inc. on behalf of Roche.

