

Lab Test Makes Checking For Diabetes— And “Pre-diabetes”—Easier *...And You Don't Have To Fast Ahead Of Time*

(NAPSA)—No matter what Washington does on health reform, there's a lot you can do to reform your own health, especially when it comes to diabetes.

If you are overweight or have other risk factors for diabetes—such as a family history of the disease—a first step is to get your blood glucose level checked. A quick and easy lab test can tell you if you actually have diabetes or are close to developing it—a condition known as pre-diabetes.

Pre-diabetes means that your blood glucose is higher than normal—but not high enough to be diagnosed as diabetic. But there's still reason for concern. As many as 40 percent of those with pre-diabetes go on to develop type 2 diabetes over the course of 3-8 years. Currently, some 57 million individuals—almost 20 percent of the U.S. population—are considered to be pre-diabetic.

The American Diabetes Association recently added an easy diabetes test, called the hemoglobin A1C test, to its list of tests recommended for identifying diabetes. The A1C test checks your average blood glucose levels over the previous two to three months—and



you don't have to fast before getting the test.

The early warning that the hemoglobin A1C test provides can be significant. For example, if it indicates that you have pre-diabetes, research shows there is a lot you can do to pull yourself back from the brink of developing this serious—and costly—condition. A recent study reported that, in people who were not yet diabetic but were headed there, losing 7 percent of their body weight, making dietary changes and increasing exercise lowered their risk of developing diabetes by 58 percent.

For more information about the value of laboratory medicine, go to www.labresultsforlife.org.