

Our Health

African Americans Are 60% More at Risk for Diabetes than other Ethnicities

(NAPS)—If you or someone you care for is ever among the nearly 40 million Americans the Centers for Disease Control estimates have diabetes, chances are good you won't even know it.

That's because nearly 90% of those who have prediabetes, and thus have an increased risk of developing the disease, aren't aware they have it.

One reason may be that people often think diabetes is a disease of old age so they aren't on the look out. In fact, adults aged 45-64 receive the majority of new diabetes diagnoses in the U.S. and the country has seen increases in disease prevalence among those 18-44.

What's more, if you're African American, you're 60 percent more likely than other ethnicities to develop the disease.

Consider these statistics:

In 2019, non-Hispanic blacks were 2.5 times more likely to be hospitalized with diabetes and associated long-term complications than non-Hispanic whites and 3.2 times more likely to be diagnosed with end-stage renal disease.

Per-capita inpatient costs were 23% higher in the Black population, who also have 65% more emergency department visits; total per-capita expenditures are highest in the Black population.

What You Can Do

A problem is this disease can affect health and quality of life at any age, but you can protect yourself three ways:

1. Be proactive—know your numbers, know your risk: From race and ethnicity, to genetics, weight and more, knowing your risk factors is the first and best step you can take in preventive measures to mitigate your risk of developing diabetes.

One of the top risk factors for developing type 2 diabetes is race and ethnicity. Type 2 diabetes is associated with increased mortality in ethnically diverse populations, specifically African Americans, who are more likely to die or be hospitalized for the treatment of end-stage kidney disease related to diabetes.

2. Make good lifestyle choices: Strategies to stay as healthy as possible and prevent diabetes and other chronic diseases include:

- Make healthy food choices.
- Walk and integrate other forms of exercise into your daily routine.
- Stop smoking.
- Track your glucose levels.
- Get preventive testing and screening



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for kidneys, blood pressure, cholesterol and cancer.

- If you do develop diabetes, work with your primary care provider to develop and follow a diabetes care plan.

Modest weight reduction (5-10% of baseline weight) and increased physical activity to at least 150 minutes per week can reduce the incidence of diabetes by more than 50%.

3. Know your diabetes status: Get screened early by age 35, especially if you have any risk factors.

Who Can Help

As part of Signify Health's In-Home Health Evaluations (IHEs), clinicians administer the proper diabetes screenings while providing the personalized support and guidance you need to prevent diabetes onset and better manage your health.

These clinicians will also assess your medication adherence and health status, while answering any questions you may have about your conditions. For people living with diabetes, these in-home screenings and services can be critical. As many as 60% of people with elevated HbA1c or sugar levels, for example, are not following their treatment plan.

Both Signify's IHEs and the recently announced diabetes Focused Visits are designed to be supplementary to a doctor's office visit, help close quality care gaps, slow chronic disease progression with education and customized care planning, and reduce hospitalizations and readmissions—all from the convenience and comfort of a health plan member's home.

To take the first step toward managing diabetes risks, visit the self-scheduling portal at www.HelloSignify.com to see if you're eligible for an In-Home Health Evaluation.