

# Chronic Disease Prevention Bulletin

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## November is American Diabetes Month

### WHAT IS DIABETES?

Diabetes is a group of diseases marked by high blood glucose levels due to defects in insulin production, insulin action, or both. Diabetes can cause serious complications and premature death, but people with diabetes can take steps to control the disease and lower the risk of complications.

### TYPES OF DIABETES

**Type 1 diabetes** develops when the body's immune system destroys pancreatic beta cells—the only cells in the body that make the hormone insulin that regulates blood glucose. To survive, people with type 1 diabetes must have insulin delivered by injection or a pump. This form of diabetes usually strikes children and young adults, although disease onset can occur at any age. Type 1 diabetes accounts for 5% to 10% of all diagnosed cases of diabetes.

**Type 2 diabetes** usually begins as insulin resistance, a disorder in which the body cells cannot use insulin properly. As the need for insulin rises, the pancreas gradually loses its ability to produce insulin. Type 2 diabetes is the most common form, accounting for 90% to 95% of all diagnosed cases of diabetes.

**Gestational diabetes** is a form of glucose intolerance that occurs in some women during pregnancy. Women who have had gestational diabetes have a 20% to 50% chance of developing diabetes in the next 5 to 10 years.

**Other types** of diabetes result from specific genetic conditions, surgery, drugs, infections, malnutrition, and other illnesses, accounting for 1% to 5% of all diagnosed cases.

### Diabetes is a COMMON disease in Georgia.

In 2004, approximately 475,000 adults aged 18 years and older in Georgia, 7.3% of the adult population, reported that they had been diagnosed with diabetes.

For every two persons with diabetes who have been diagnosed, another has not yet been diagnosed. Thus, approximately 238,000 additional adult Georgians have undiagnosed diabetes.

Thousands more are at increased risk of getting diabetes because of aging, obesity, unhealthy eating habits, and physical inactivity.

### Diabetes is a SERIOUS disease in Georgia.

In 2004, diabetes was the seventh leading cause of death, killing 1,622 Georgians, equivalent to over 31 deaths every week.

For every death for which diabetes is the primary cause, there are two other deaths for which diabetes is a contributing cause.

Age-adjusted death rates per 100,000 population were 1.3 times higher for men (26) than for women (20). The rates were also twofold higher among blacks (37.8) than whites (18.7).

About 35% of diabetes deaths are in persons under the age of 65. In 2004, the proportion of diabetes deaths that were premature (before 65 years) was highest among black males (49.4%), followed by white males (37.0%), black females (35.2%), and white females (25.3%).

Diabetes can contribute to blindness, kidney failure, amputations, heart disease, stroke, hypertension, nerve damage, impotence, skin disorders, periodontal disease, pregnancy complications, disability, and premature death. Many

complications can be prevented with early detection and comprehensive management.

In 2005, adults with diabetes in Georgia met only two national targets (Healthy People 2010 Objectives) for the recommended routine care for diabetes.

### **Diabetes is a COSTLY disease in Georgia.**

In 2004, there were 15,499 hospitalizations for which diabetes was the principal diagnosis, resulting in nearly \$240 million hospital charges and approximately 78,700 days or about 216 years of hospital stay.

In Georgia, the cost of diabetes due to medical care, lost productivity, and premature death is estimated to be over \$4 billion per year.

The health care cost for a person with diabetes is approximately \$13,200 per year compared with \$2,600 per year for a person of comparable age without diabetes.

### **The GOOD News... Type 2 Diabetes can be prevented! Here are some tips...**

#### **Reduce Portion Sizes**

Keep meat, poultry and fish portions to about 3 ounces (about the size of a deck of cards).

Try not to snack while cooking or cleaning the kitchen.

Try to eat meals and snacks at regular times every day.

Make sure you **eat breakfast** everyday.

#### **Move More Each Day**

Show your kids the dances you used to do when you were their age.

Turn up the music and **jam** while doing household chores.

Deliver a message in person to a co-worker instead of e-mailing.

Take the stairs to your office. Or take the stairs as far as you can, and then take the elevator the rest of the way.

#### **Make Healthy Food Choices**

Try getting one new fruit or **vegetable** every time you grocery shop.

Low-fat macaroni and cheese can be a main dish. Serve it with your favorite vegetable and a salad.

Try eating foods from other countries. Many dishes contain more vegetables, **whole grains** and beans and less meat.

#### **Nurture Your Mind, Body and Soul**

Don't try to change your entire way of eating and increasing your **physical activity** all at once. Try one new activity or food a week.

Find mellow ways to **relax**—try deep breathing, take an easy paced walk, or enjoy your favorite easy listening music.

Give yourself daily "pampering time." Honor this time, whether it's **reading** a book, taking a long bath, or meditating.

Try not to eat out of boredom or frustration. If you are not hungry, do something else, such as taking a long walk.



[www.livehealthygeorgia.org](http://www.livehealthygeorgia.org)

Source: GDPH 2006 Diabetes Fact sheet & NIDDK  
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