

## November is American Diabetes Month

According to the American Diabetes Association, nearly 24 million Americans have diabetes and another 57 million people have pre-diabetes which puts them at risk of developing type 2 diabetes. If the current diabetes trend continues, nearly one out every three children will face a life of diabetes.



About 60-70% of people with diabetes suffer from some form of nerve damage that may cause pain in their hands or feet and other nerve problems, and the rate of amputation for individuals with diabetes is ten times higher than for people without diabetes. Two out of three people with diabetes die from heart disease or stroke. Fortunately, there are things you can do to learn about your risk for diabetes and take action before you develop this disease.

Risk factors which increase the likelihood of developing diabetes include:

- Being overweight or obese (body mass index over 24.9)
- A parent, brother, or sister with diabetes
- African American, American Indian, Asian American, Pacific Islander, or Hispanic American/Latino heritage
- Prior history of gestational diabetes or birth of at least one baby weighing more than 9 pounds
- High blood pressure measuring 140/90 or higher
- Abnormal cholesterol with HDL ("good") cholesterol is 35 or lower, or triglyceride level is 250 or higher
- Physical inactivity—exercising fewer than three times a week
- Over the age of 45 (risk increases even higher after age 65)

Research studies have found that moderate weight loss and exercise can prevent or delay type 2 diabetes among adults at high-risk of diabetes. Being overweight can keep your body from making and using insulin properly, and can also cause high blood pressure. The Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP), a major federally funded study of 3,234 people at high risk for diabetes, showed that people can delay and possibly prevent the disease by losing a small amount of weight (5 to 7 percent of total body weight) through 30 minutes of physical activity 5 days a week and healthier eating.

Anyone aged 45 years or older should consider getting tested for diabetes, especially if you are overweight. If you are younger than 45, but are overweight and have one or more of the risk factors listed above, you should talk to your doctor about getting tested for diabetes. For more information on preventing and controlling diabetes, call the National Diabetes Education Program at 1-888-693-6337 or visit [www.YourDiabetesInfo.org](http://www.YourDiabetesInfo.org).