

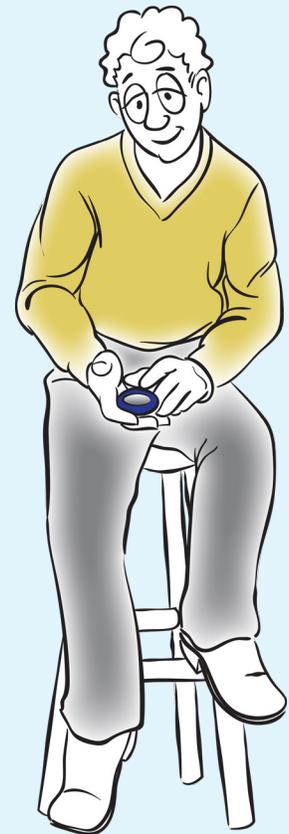
November is National Diabetes Awareness Month

9.3%. 29.1 million. Both representations of the number of Americans who have been diagnosed with diabetes. The 7th leading cause of death in the United States, the American Diabetes Association states that an additional 86 million Americans are at risk of developing the disease.

Generally, people with diabetes either have a total lack of insulin (type 1 diabetes) or they have too little insulin or cannot use it effectively (type 2 diabetes). Type 1 diabetes accounts for 5% of diabetic diagnosis while type 2 diabetes accounts for the remaining cases in the U.S. at 95%.

Type 1 diabetes has no known prevention. Risk factors for developing type 2 diabetes include obesity, having a family history of diabetes, and having diabetes while pregnant (gestational diabetes). Many people with type 2 diabetes can control their blood glucose (sugar) with lifestyle changes such as healthier eating and being active. Others may require oral medications or insulin injections.

As with caring for other chronic conditions, it is essential that you monitor the status, including regular visits to see your family physician. Even if you are not diagnosed with diabetes and live a healthy life, visiting your family physician at least once a year for an annual wellness visit is a good idea. In doing so, your physician could detect any early onsets of the condition and help guide you through a prevention or management plan, tailored to you.



Diabetics Should Receive a Series of Tests

Staying proactive helps to manage diabetes – here's some tests to get you started.

- **LDL-C Test** – Twice as likely to develop heart disease, diabetics should monitor their body's level of "bad" (LDL) cholesterol.
- **HbA1C Test** – This test provides an average of your blood sugar control and is used to adjust medications.
- **Flu Vaccination** – Even when well-managed, diabetes increases the risk of flu-related complications.
- **Blood Pressure** – Common among diabetics, high blood pressure can lead to other chronic conditions when left unmanaged.
- **Retinal Eye Exam** – Diabetes can effect the small blood vessels behind the retina causing diabetic retinopathy. Left untreated, it can lead to severe pain, even blindness.
- **Wellness Exam** – Make sure to visit your family physician at least once per year.



SOURCES: American Diabetes Association, WebMD