



A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

Diabetes Awareness

Diabetes Alert Day — March 22, 2016

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[Announcer] *This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.*

[Dr. Gaynes] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly feature of the *MMWR*, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm your host, Dr. Robert Gaynes.

Diabetes is a common chronic disease in the United States. More than 29 million people have it and 86 million people are at risk for developing it. Tanya Johnson is a communications specialist with CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. She's joining us today to discuss ways to prevent or control the onset of diabetes. Welcome to the show, Tanya.

[Tanya Johnson] Thank you.

[Dr. Gaynes] Tanya, let's start with what *is* diabetes?

[Tanya Johnson] Diabetes is a disease in which blood glucose, or blood sugar, levels are above normal. Most of the food we eat is turned into glucose, or sugar, for our bodies to use for energy. Our body makes insulin to help glucose get into our cells. When you have diabetes, your body either doesn't make enough insulin or can't use its own insulin as well as it should. This causes sugar to build up in your blood. Diabetes can cause serious health complications, including heart disease, blindness, kidney failure, and amputations. Diabetes is the seventh leading cause of death in the United States.

[Dr. Gaynes] What is the difference between type 1 and type 2 diabetes?

[Tanya Johnson] Type 1 diabetes is where your body does not produce enough insulin and it can't be prevented. Type 2 is where your body does not use insulin properly. Type 2 is a two-fold issue. Your genetics put you at risk and your lifestyle causes the disease to develop.

[Dr. Gaynes] Are there any symptoms of diabetes?

[Tanya Johnson] Many people with diabetes do not show any symptoms, but if they do, it might be frequent urination, excessive thirst, extreme hunger, blurred vision, tingling or numbness in the hands or feet, feeling very tired much of the time, and perhaps having sores that are slow to heal.

[Dr. Gaynes] What can we do to prevent type 2 diabetes?

[Tanya Johnson] We have good news on how to prevent type 2 diabetes, particularly in those who have what we call "prediabetes." Prediabetes is where the blood sugar is already elevated but it's not yet high enough to be diagnosed as type 2 diabetes. Type 2 diabetes can be prevented by doing two things. One, participating in about 150 minutes of physical activity a week, and two, selecting healthier foods that allow you to lose about five to seven percent of your body weight. That would mean, in a 200 pound person, about 10 to 14 pounds. Diet and physical activity go a long way in preventing type 2 diabetes.

[Dr. Gaynes] When should a person be screened for type 2 diabetes?

[Tanya Johnson] People should be tested for type 2 diabetes beginning at age 45 and tested about every three years, but your health care provider may really want you to be tested more frequently or start that testing at an earlier age. It again depends on those risk factors that you have and what your health care provider thinks is the *best* course of action for *you*.

[Dr. Gaynes] Tanya, where can listeners get more information about diabetes?

[Tanya Johnson] Listeners can go to cdc.gov/diabetes.

[Dr. Gaynes] Thanks, Tanya. I've been talking today with CDC's Tanya Johnson about ways to prevent the onset of type 2 diabetes.

Eighty six million adults in the U.S. have prediabetes, but only 10 percent know they have it. Prediabetes places them at risk for developing type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and stroke. Make an appointment with your health care provider to learn if *you're* at risk for diabetes.

Until next time, be well. This is Dr. Robert Gaynes for A Cup of Health with CDC.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.