



A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

Deterring Diabetes

American Diabetes Month — November 2010

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[Announcer] This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC — safer, healthier people.

[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 chronic condition in which the body doesn't produce enough insulin to break down sugar in the blood; it is now the seventh leading cause of death in the U.S. A recent CDC report projected that up to one third of U.S. adults could have diabetes by 2050, if preventive steps aren't taken immediately.

Nilka Rios Burrows is an epidemiologist with CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. She's joining us today to discuss ways to prevent and control diabetes. Welcome to the show, Nilka.

[Ms. Burrows] Thank you.

[Dr. Gaynes] Nilka, how many people in the U.S. have diabetes?

[Ms. Burrows] The number of people with diabetes is increasing, and now we're estimating that about 24 million Americans have diabetes and about one quarter of them are unaware that they have it. Every day more than 4,000 adults are newly-diagnosed, and about 200 people die from diabetes.

[Dr. Gaynes] What are the symptoms of diabetes?

[Ms. Burrows] The most common symptoms are: frequent urination, excessive thirst, unexplained weight loss, extreme hunger, sudden vision changes, tingling or numbness in the hands or feet, feeling very tired much of the time, and sores that are slow to heal. However, people with diabetes might not show any of these symptoms.

[Dr. Gaynes] What factors put people at higher risk for diabetes?

[Ms. Burrows] Obesity is a major risk factor for developing diabetes. Other risk factors include: older age, family history of diabetes, physical inactivity, and being of a high risk ethnic population, such as African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans and Alaska Natives, and Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

[Dr. Gaynes] When should people be screened to see if they have diabetes?

[Ms. Burrows] If you're older than 45 years, you should be tested for diabetes. If you're younger than 45, but are overweight or obese, and have risk factors for diabetes, such as being physically inactive, or having a relative with diabetes, you should also be tested.

[Dr. Gaynes] What are some of the health problems that can result from uncontrolled diabetes?

[Ms. Burrows] Diabetes is the leading cause of kidney failure, lower limb amputations, and new cases of blindness among adults in the United States, and also a major cause of heart disease and stroke. However, people with diabetes, together with their support network, can take steps to control the disease and lower their risk for complications. Talk to your health care provider about how to manage your blood sugar, your blood pressure, and your cholesterol, and it is especially important for people with diabetes to get their flu shot.

[Dr. Gaynes] Well, what can people do to decrease their chances of getting diabetes?

[Ms. Burrows] The good news is that you don't have to knock yourself out to prevent diabetes. Studies have shown that people who are at risk of developing diabetes, who lose weight, and increase their physical activity, can prevent or delay diabetes, and in some cases even return their blood glucose levels to normal.

[Dr. Gaynes] Where can listeners get more information about diabetes?

[Ms. Burrows] For more information, go to www.cdc.gov/diabetes.

[Dr. Gaynes] Thanks, Nilka. I've been talking today with CDC's Nilka Rios Burrows about ways to prevent and control diabetes.

The two main causes of diabetes in the U.S. are poor diet and lack of exercise, both of which are linked to obesity. To decrease your chances of getting diabetes, exercise regularly, and eat a healthy diet that's high in fruits and vegetables, and low in fat.

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, 24/7.