



## A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

### *Diabetes Awareness*

*American Diabetes Month — November 2009*

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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 one of the most debilitating diseases in the U.S., affecting nearly 24 million people. If it isn't well managed, diabetes can lead to a number of complications, including blindness, kidney failure, loss of limbs through amputation, and even death.

Nilka Rios Burrows is an epidemiologist with CDC's Division of Diabetes Translation. 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, diabetes is such a common problem. Can you give us a clearer idea of the burden of this disease?

[Ms. Burrows] The numbers that you were just talking about represent about eight percent of the U.S. population, and about six million of these people are unaware of their disease. In 2007, there were about 1.6 million new adult cases of diabetes and every 24 hours, more than 4,000 adults are diagnosed with diabetes and approximately 200 people die from diabetes.

[Dr. Gaynes] Is diabetes more common in any particular age group?

[Ms. Burrows] Diabetes can be diagnosed at any age, but it is more frequently diagnosed in the older age groups. About one in four people age 60 years or older are estimated to have diabetes.

[Dr. Gaynes] What places someone at risk for diabetes?

[Ms. Burrows] In the list of risk factors for diabetes, there are some that can be changed and there are some that cannot be changed. It all depends on the type of diabetes that the person has. For people with type 1 diabetes, the risk factors cannot be changed, and they include genetic or environmental factors. For people with type 2 diabetes, the factors that they cannot change include older age, family history of diabetes, and race/ethnicity. However, among the factors that can be changed for people with type 2 diabetes are obesity and physical inactivity.

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

[Ms. Burrows] For people with type 1 diabetes, the symptoms include frequent urination, unusual thirst, extreme hunger, and fatigue. For people with type 2 diabetes, they can have any of

these symptoms, but often they have no symptoms. So if they're in a high risk group, such as older than 45 years, overweight or obese, with a family history of diabetes, or if they're in a race/ethnic group, they should talk to their doctor about getting tested.

[Dr. Gaynes] Nilka, does diabetes always require insulin treatment?

[Ms. Burrows] The treatment options will depend on the type of diabetes that the person has and what it takes to bring their diabetes under control. People with type 1 diabetes must have insulin to survive. People with type 2 diabetes would require diet and exercise and probably oral medications to control their diabetes; maybe even insulin, at times, if their diabetes cannot be controlled with other treatment options.

People with diabetes are more likely to die from influenza than people who do not have diabetes, so it is very important for them to talk to their doctor about getting a flu shot.

[Dr. Gaynes] Nilka, how can people decrease their chances of getting type 2 diabetes?

[Ms. Burrows] Developing diabetes among people at risk is not inevitable. Studies have shown that people who are at risk who lose weight and increase their physical activity can prevent or delay diabetes, and actually they don't have to knock themselves out to do so. A modest weight loss of about seven percent of their body weight and physical activity – a half hour a day most days of the week - will prevent or delay diabetes.

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

[Ms. Burrows] They can go to [www.cdc.gov/diabetes](http://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.

Remember, obesity and physical inactivity are major factors in the onset and severity of type 2 diabetes. To prevent or delay the disease onset, eat a balanced diet and maintain a healthy weight.

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](http://www.cdc.gov) or call 1-800-CDC-INFO, 24/7.