



# Protect Our Future... Diabetes Awareness Month

**November is Diabetes Awareness Month!** Diabetes is one of the most common diseases in our nation today. Everyone knows someone who has diabetes - a co-worker, family member or friend. You may even have diabetes or be in danger of developing it. We can protect our future by being aware of what diabetes is, how it affects our bodies, its' complications and how to manage it.

## What Is Diabetes?

It is a disease in which a small organ, the pancreas, cannot make insulin or enough insulin for a person's body to change the foods they eat into energy. This results in too much sugar (glucose) in the blood and without insulin, the body cannot use the sugar and it actually becomes a "toxic" substance in our bodies (hyperglycemia). Over time, high glucose levels can damage nerves, organs and tissues. There are three types of diabetes:

**Type 1** – This kind of diabetes usually develops in childhood or early adulthood. It is caused by the pancreas not making any insulin. People with Type 1 must take insulin to survive.

**Type 2** -This kind of diabetes used to be seen only in adults. Unfortunately we are now finding it in children as young as nine years old. The pancreas doesn't produce enough insulin or the body can't use it properly to process the foods we eat. Type 2 diabetes may remain undetected for many years. It is often, but not always, associated with overweight or obesity, which itself can cause insulin resistance and lead to high blood glucose levels. These people must take oral medication to help their bodies utilize what insulin they do make. If their lifestyle is not changed, they may eventually need to start using insulin.

**Gestational** - This kind of diabetes occurs during pregnancy when the insulin is not as effective. This can cause complications for mother and baby. It goes away after the baby is born, however, almost half of the women who have had gestational diabetes will develop Type 2 diabetes within five to ten years after delivery.

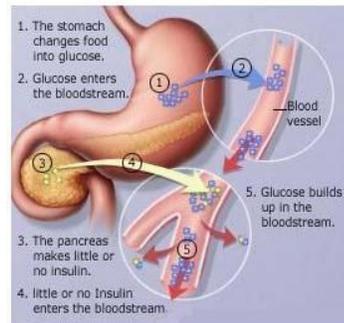
## Symptoms of Diabetes

Individuals can experience different signs and symptoms of diabetes, and sometimes there may be no signs. The development of Type 1 diabetes is usually sudden and dramatic while the symptoms can often be mild or absent in people with Type 2 diabetes, making this type of diabetes hard to detect.



Some of the signs commonly experienced include:

- Frequent urination
- Excessive thirst
- Increased hunger
- Weight loss
- Tiredness
- Lack of interest and concentration
- A tingling sensation or numbness in the hands or feet
- Blurred vision
- Frequent infections
- Slow-healing wounds
- Vomiting and stomach pain (often mistaken as the flu)



**November  
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Is there a health topic you want to know more about? Contact Grace Keith, Health Educator, 850.926.0400 x. 215 or Grace.Keith@flhealth.gov



## Possible Complications of Diabetes

- Heart - a greater chance of heart disease, heart attack or stroke
- Kidneys - more difficult to filter the blood, if the kidneys fail - dialysis (cleansing the kidneys by filtering the blood through a machine) is necessary.
- Eyes - blood vessels can be damaged and result in poor vision or blindness.
- Nerves - poor blood circulation can starve nerves and cause tingling and pain in the feet and hands, if not treated carefully, it can result of amputation of toes, feet and/or legs.



## Prevention

**Type 1** - at this time, it is not preventable.

**Type 2** - Lifestyle changes are the best way to prevent diabetes:

- **Lose Weight** - improves the body's use of insulin, improves general health as well.
- **Get Physical** - activity is one of the main factors in the prevention of diabetes. Increased physical activity is important in maintaining weight loss, reducing blood pressure, improving insulin use and decreasing stress.
- **Eat Well** - A balanced and nutritious diet is essential for health. Choose fresh fruits and vegetables, complex carbohydrates and whole grains. Avoid white foods - potatoes, rice, bread as these turn into glucose very quickly. Drink plenty of water and avoid sugary sodas, teas and sports drinks.



## Need More Information or Help?

Individual counseling is available at the Florida Department of Health in Wakulla County. There is **NO CHARGE** for this service. Meal planning, diabetic nutrition, how to use a glucose monitor, etc. are all topics that can be addressed. Call Grace Keith - Health Educator at 926-0400, ext. 215 or email to: [grace.keith@flhealth.gov](mailto:grace.keith@flhealth.gov)



**Childbirth Preparation...** The Healthy Start Program offers a 5-week Childbirth Education class for pregnant moms and their partners. Topics include: coping with labor and delivery, comfort techniques, infant care - including Infant CPR, post-partum care, breastfeeding and car seat safety and fittings. The next series of classes are scheduled for **November 19-December 17 from 6:30-8:30 p.m.** All classes are held at the Wakulla County Health Department. For more information or to sign up for the class, call Mary Westbrook at 926-0400, ext. 233. There is **no charge** for this class!



**Stop Smoking Classes...** Tobacco Free Florida offers a number of free and convenient resources to help tobacco users quit. The Florida Quitline and WebCoach are available 24 hours per day, 7 days a week. For more information about local, in-person classes, call Tonya at 926-0400, ext. 217. Smoking affects every organ in your body and stopping using any kind of tobacco can help you live a longer and healthier life! To get started visit <http://floridaquitline.com> or call 1-877-U-CAN-NOW (1.877.822.6669).

**Basic First Aid...** Please call for more information on the next class at the Health department. The course is endorsed by the American Safety and Health Institute. Call 926-0400, ext. 215 for more information or to register for a class. The cost is \$25.00 per person. The fee must be paid in advance and there is no refund.



## Hands-Only CPR, No Excuses



The next Hands-only CPR class is on Thursday, January 16 from 7-9 p.m., 2014 at the Health Department. The course is endorsed by the American Safety and Health Institute. Call 926-0400, ext. 215 for more information or to register for a class. The cost is \$25.00 per person, **the fee must be paid in advance and there is no refund.**



The Florida Department of Health in Wakulla County has a Service Provider Kiosk to help you find who and what you are looking for. The kiosk is located in the lobby of the Health Department, which is open Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p. m.

You can search sites such as 211Big Bend, Whole Child Leon, Florida Department of Children and Families and Wakulla County Coalition for Youth Resource Directory. Many providers are local and have sliding fee scales. You can find many types of services from daily needs to emergency assistance. This service is also very helpful in the event that you have just moved into the area. There is no charge to use the kiosk.

