

# November: American Diabetes Month

By: Lisa Franzen-Castle, PhD, RD ([lfranz2@unl.edu](mailto:lfranz2@unl.edu));  
Jean Ann Fischer, MS, RD, LMNT, CNSD ([jfischer6@unl.edu](mailto:jfischer6@unl.edu));  
Debra Schroeder, MS ([dschroeder1@unl.edu](mailto:dschroeder1@unl.edu))



Did you know every 20 seconds, someone is diagnosed with diabetes? That is more than 4,300 friends, neighbors, co-workers, and family members a day. November is American Diabetes Month and there are many ways to prevent or delay type 2 diabetes, such as eating healthy, being physically active, quitting smoking, and maintaining a healthy weight. Check out the following information on defining diabetes, preventing/delaying type 2 diabetes, and a great resource on diabetes from UNL Extension called *Control Diabetes for Life*.



## What is Diabetes?

**Diabetes:** is a disease that impacts the way our body uses fuel from our food.

- When we eat, our body breaks down food for energy into glucose or sugar in our blood.
- For glucose to be used, insulin, a hormone produced by the pancreas, must be present.
- Symptoms of type 1 and 2 diabetes are frequent urination, unusual thirst, extreme hunger, unusual weight loss, extreme fatigue, numbness in hands and feet, and frequent infections.
- For all types of diabetes, management includes working with your health care team to eat healthy foods, monitor carbohydrate intake and blood sugar levels, exercise appropriately and maintain a healthy weight.

**Type 1 Diabetes:** is usually diagnosed in children and young adults and occurs in 5-10% of people with diabetes. People with type 1 diabetes must take insulin because the body does not produce insulin.

**Type 2 diabetes:** is the most common form, either the body does not produce enough insulin or the body is not able to use the insulin. Treatment may include taking diabetes medication or insulin therapy.

**Pre-diabetes:** 57 million people in the US have pre-diabetes, a condition that may result in long term damage to the body and an increased risk for heart disease and stroke.

- Before people have type 2 diabetes, they almost always have pre-diabetes (*blood glucose levels higher than normal but not high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes*).
- In the Diabetes Prevention Program Study, people with pre-diabetes who were physically active 30 minutes a day and reduced their body weight by 5-10% showed a 58% reduction in developing diabetes.

## Delaying & Preventing Type 2 Diabetes

- **Eat Healthier:** This is a great way to lower your risk for type 2 diabetes and heart disease. Start building a healthier plate by eating more vegetables, fruits, leaner meats, whole grains, and low-fat dairy. Check out [www.MyPyramid.gov](http://www.MyPyramid.gov) to help you focus on foods you need more of. MyPyramid has eating plans and tools to plan and assess food choices.
- **Be Active:** Physical activity can help lower your risk for pre-diabetes, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and stroke. It is never too late to be physically active. Find others who are trying to be active, join a group for exercise or support or find a walking buddy, and work together to reach your goals. Aim for 30 minutes on most days.
- **Quit Smoking:** If you do not smoke make a plan to never start, and if you do smoke, challenge yourself to quit. Within a few years of quitting your risk of stroke and coronary artery disease are similar to non-smokers. Visit [www.smokefree.gov](http://www.smokefree.gov) for a step-by-step quit guide and tools to help you quit.



**Know how. Know now.**



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- **Maintain a Healthy Weight:** Being overweight raises your risk for type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and stroke. You do not have to lose a lot of weight; even 10–15 pounds can make a difference. People who have lost weight and kept it off are typically physically active most days, eat breakfast, and journal about food and activity habits.

## Diabetes Statistics in Nebraska

Nine percent of Nebraskans have diabetes, and rising medical costs are a concern for all of us.

- In 2008, the estimated cost of diabetes for Nebraskans was \$809,200,000, which includes medical costs of \$524,500,000 and lost productivity valued at \$284,700,000 (DHHS).
- Diabetics, on average, have medical costs 2.3 times higher than those without diabetes.
- In 2006 diabetes was the 7th leading cause of death in Nebraska, accounting for 437 deaths, a 40% increase since 1995 (DHHS).

## Control Diabetes for Life

In 2009-10, 567 people with diabetes participated in *Control Diabetes for Life*.

- The three programs helped participants set new goals for diabetes self management practices to control blood sugar levels and understand the benefits of physical activity.
- Calculated savings in medical care for all participants could equal up to \$510,000.

## Sample Comments from Past Participants:

“I have felt reinforced by this series. I always learn something and this year asked many questions about an upcoming surgery and applied those thoughts, causing me less stress.”

“I have enjoyed this series! I especially like the handouts. I love the recipes! I use to hate exercise and this program showed me ways to enjoy it and work it in my schedule 5 days a week!”

## Control Diabetes for November 2010

The theme for the November 2010 is “Weathering the Winter.” Topics that will be covered during the two-hour program include:

- Is an Aspirin a Day Still OK?
- Cold and Flu Rescue
- Sneaky Sodium
- Indulge Your Taste Buds
- Question & answer period with credentialed professionals



Team-teaching the program will be Phyllis Heimann, RN, & Certified Diabetes Educator; Stacie Petersen, RN, & Certified Diabetes Educator; Mary Clare Stalp, RD, LMNT, all of Franciscan Care Services in West Point, and Debra Schroeder, MS, UNL Extension Educator in Cuming County.

Email Debra Schroeder at [dschroeder1@unl.edu](mailto:dschroeder1@unl.edu) for details of the session in your area or after December 1st view the entire session at: <http://food.unl.edu/controldiabetesforlife>.

\*You do not have to be diabetic to participate; non-diabetic participants have included those with family members who have diabetes and health professionals wanting to learn more about diabetes.

[Learn more about successfully managing diabetes throughout the upcoming holiday season by clicking here!](#)

## Sources:

1. American Diabetes Association. <http://www.diabetes.org/>.
2. Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). <http://www.hhs.state.ne.us/>.
3. United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). MyPyramid. <http://www.mypyramid.gov/>.
4. Quit Smoking Today. <http://www.smokefree.gov/>.

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