



THE FACTS ABOUT DIABETES: AMERICA'S SIXTH LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH

What is diabetes?

Diabetes is a chronic disease in which the body does not produce or properly use insulin, a hormone that is needed to convert sugar, starches, and other food into energy. As a result, people with diabetes have higher than normal blood glucose (sugar) levels. If left uncontrolled, diabetes causes serious complications, including heart disease, stroke, vision loss, kidney disease, nerve damage, and lower limb amputations. People with diabetes can take steps to control the disease and lower risk of complications.

How many Americans have diabetes?

- 18.2 million Americans have diabetes – 6.3 percent of the U.S. population. Of these, 5.2 million do not know they have the disease.
- Each year, about 1.3 million people ages 20 or older are diagnosed with diabetes.
- The number of people diagnosed with diabetes has risen from 1.5 million in 1958 to 13 million in 2002, an increase of epidemic proportions.

What is the prevalence of diabetes by type?

- Type 1 (previously called insulin-dependent or juvenile-onset) diabetes accounts for 5 to 10 percent of all diagnosed cases of diabetes.
- Type 2 (previously called non-insulin-dependent or adult-onset) diabetes accounts for 90 to 95 percent of all diagnosed cases of diabetes. Type 2 diabetes is increasingly being diagnosed in children and adolescents.

What is the prevalence of diabetes by gender?

- 8.7 million men have diabetes (8.7 percent of all men ages 20 years and older).
- 9.3 million women have diabetes (8.7 percent of all women ages 20 years and older).

What is the prevalence of diabetes by age?

- 18 million Americans ages 20 or older have diabetes – 8.7 percent of this age group.
- 8.6 million Americans ages 60 or older have diabetes – 18.3 percent of this age group.
- 206,000 people under age 20 have diabetes – 0.25 percent of this age group.

What is the prevalence of diabetes by race/ethnicity?

Non-Hispanic Whites

- 12.5 million; 8.4 percent of all non-Hispanic whites aged twenty and older have diabetes.

African Americans

- 2.7 million; 11.4 percent of all non-Hispanic blacks aged twenty and older have diabetes.
- African Americans are 1.6 times more likely to have diabetes as non-Hispanic whites of similar age.

Hispanic/Latino Americans

- 2 million; 8.2 percent of Hispanic/Latino Americans ages 20 or older have diabetes.
- On average, Hispanic/Latino Americans are 1.5 times more likely to have diabetes as non-Hispanic whites of similar age.
- Residents of Puerto Rico are 1.8 times more likely to have diagnosed diabetes than U.S. non-Hispanic whites.

Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders

- Prevalence data for diabetes among Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are limited. Some groups within this population are at increased risk for diabetes.
- In 2002, Native Hawaiians, Japanese, and Filipino residents of Hawaii aged 20 years or older were approximately 2 times as likely to have diagnosed diabetes as white residents of Hawaii of similar age.

American Indians and Alaska Natives

- American Indians and Alaska Natives on average are 2.3 times more likely to have diabetes as non-Hispanic whites.
- About 14.9 percent of American Indians and Alaska Natives aged twenty years and older who are receiving care from the Indian Health Service (IHS) have diabetes.
- Rates of diabetes vary widely among Native American tribes, bands, pueblos, and villages. At the regional level, diabetes is least common among Alaska Natives (8.2%) and most common among American Indians in the southeastern U.S. and Arizona (27.8%).

How many deaths are linked to diabetes?

- Diabetes was the 6th leading cause of death listed on U.S. death certificates in 2000.
- Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death among people with diabetes—about 65 percent die of heart disease or stroke.
- Overall risk for death among people with diabetes is about two times that of people without diabetes.

How much does diabetes cost the nation?

- Total health care and related costs for the treatment of diabetes run about \$132 billion annually.
- Of this total, direct medical costs (e.g., hospitalizations, medical care, treatment supplies) account for about \$92 billion.
- The other \$40 billion covers indirect costs such as disability payments, time lost from work, and premature death.

* Adapted from National Diabetes Fact Sheet: General information and national estimates on diabetes in the United States, 2003. Bethesda, MD. National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, NIH., 2003.