

Let's Prevent type 2 Diabetes: Step by Step.

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This year we learned that millions of Americans are at risk for developing type 2 diabetes. About 40 percent of U.S. adults ages 40 to 74 – millions of whom are Hispanic or Latino – currently have pre-diabetes, a condition that raises a person's risk of developing type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and stroke. However, in clinical trials that were conducted as part of the landmark Diabetes Prevention Program, we also know that “pre-diabetes” does not have to be a pre-cursor to diabetes, if those at risk take steps to stop the onset of this devastating disease in its tracks. By losing a small amount of weight and getting 30 minutes of physical activity five days a week, diabetes can be prevented.

Of the 30 million Hispanics living in the United States, about 2 million have diagnosed diabetes.—that's eight percent of our population in this country. In addition, a Hispanic child born in this decade has a 50 percent chance of developing diabetes in his or her lifetime. As the largest minority population in the country, we cannot afford to take these statistics for granted. Our health is America's health. Billions of dollars in medical care could potentially be spent on diabetes care, if we do not turn back this epidemic.

With advice and tools provided by the National Diabetes Education Program, a joint program of the National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, we as Hispanic/Latinos can begin the journey toward making lifestyle changes that will improve our future. The NDEP's “Prevenamos la diabetes tipo 2. Paso a Paso” (*Let's Prevent Type 2 Diabetes: Step by Step*) campaign provides educational materials for diabetes prevention like *MOVIMIENTO, Por Su Vida* (*Movement, For Your Life*) CD, a collection of original Latin songs that encourage people to get moving. Or the “recetas” meal planner booklet that features healthier twists on traditional Latino recipes. All of these materials are free and are great for getting started.

Getting on the road to a healthy lifestyle is like learning to walk. Putting one foot in front of the other, each action, whether it is a taking a walk around the block during your lunch break or snacking on fruits and vegetables, gets us to our goal with a feeling of satisfaction and accomplishment. We can tackle the challenge of turning back the clock on the diabetes epidemic in our community. I urge you to take a moment and log on to NDEP's web site at www.ndep.nih.gov and find out how you prevent diabetes...step by step.

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