

## Statistics

23.6 million people in the US have diabetes

> 60% of non-traumatic lower-limb amputations occur in diabetics

The risk for stroke is 2 to 4 times higher among people with diabetes

60-70% of diabetics have mild to severe forms of nervous system damage.

Diabetic retinopathy causes 12,000 - 24,000 new cases of blindness each year

Diabetes is the leading cause of kidney failure, with 44% of new cases in 2005.

# Diabetes

*Complications: The Importance of Self Care*



## Commitment

Diabetes is a serious disease. Following your diabetes treatment plan takes round-the-clock commitment. But your efforts are worthwhile. Careful management of diabetes can reduce your risk of serious (even life-threatening) complications. Following your physician's plan and making lifestyle changes can help prevent serious complications of diabetes such as:

- Liver Disease
- Amputation (foot/feet)
- Diabetic Ketoacidosis
- Diabetic Coma
- Kidney Disease
- Blindness
- Diabetic Neuropathy
- High Blood Pressure
- Skin Problems
- Stroke

## Serious Complications

**Kidney Disease** – Kidneys are remarkable organs. Inside them are millions of tiny blood vessels that act as filters. Their job is to remove waste products from the blood. Diabetes can damage the kidneys and cause them to fail. Failing kidneys lose their ability to filter out waste products, resulting in kidney disease.

**Liver Disease** – Poorly controlled blood sugar increases your risk of non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, which can lead to scarring of the liver (non-alcoholic cirrhosis). Controlling your blood sugar levels, maintaining a healthy weight, reducing high cholesterol and avoiding excessive consumption of alcohol can help you avoid liver disease.

**Stroke** – If you have diabetes, you're much more likely to have a stroke, heart disease or a heart attack. In fact, 2 out of 3 people with diabetes die from stroke or heart disease. You can lower your risk by keeping your blood glucose (sugar), blood pressure and cholesterol on target with meal planning, physical activity and medication.

**High Blood Pressure (Hypertension)** – increases your risk of heart attack, stroke and eye problems and kidney disease. 2 out of 3 adults with diabetes have high blood pressure. Having your blood pressure checked regularly and taking action to reach your blood pressure target can prevent or delay diabetes problems. Physical activity helps decrease blood pressure.

Resource: American Diabetic Association

## Eye Care

Diabetics are more likely to get an eye disease than people without diabetes. Neglecting to care for your eyes can lead to retinal detachment, glaucoma or blindness. To keep your eyes free of disease, you need to keep your blood glucose levels close to normal, control high blood pressure, lower high cholesterol, quit smoking and make sure you get your dilated eye and visual exams yearly by an eye doctor.

## Foot Care

People with diabetes are far more likely to have a foot or leg amputated than other people. Diabetes reduces blood flow to the feet. Also, many people with diabetes have nerve disease, which reduces sensation. Together, these problems make it easy to get ulcers and infections that may lead to amputation. Most amputations are preventable with regular care and proper footwear.

Take good care of your feet and see your health care provider right away about foot problems.