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## FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH RECOGNIZES DIABETES AWARENESS MONTH



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**Tallahassee, Fla.**—The Florida Department of Health recognizes November as Diabetes Awareness Month, a month set aside every year to raise awareness about diabetes and promote the importance of taking steps to confront diabetes as a critical health issue. The theme for this year is *The Family and Diabetes*, strengthening the role of the family in the management, care, prevention and education of diabetes.

“Diabetes is a very serious disease affecting millions of Americans, but it can be managed with a healthy lifestyle,” said State Surgeon General and Secretary Dr. Celeste Philip. “This year, I encourage you to know your risk factors for diabetes and act as a support system for those in your life who may be affected by the disease.”

The number of people diagnosed with diabetes has more than tripled in the last 20 years in the U.S. In Florida, it is estimated that over 2.4 million people have diabetes and over 5.8 million have prediabetes. Diabetes is the seventh leading cause of death in Florida.

There are three main types of diabetes: type 1, type 2, and gestational diabetes (diabetes while pregnant). Women with diabetes have more difficulty conceiving and may have poor pregnancy outcomes, so it is especially important for women to be aware of their risk factors for developing diabetes, including having a family history of diabetes as well as age, weight, and physical activity level.

Due to better treatments, people with diabetes are now living longer—and with a better quality of life—than ever before. Healthy lifestyles can also reduce the impact that diabetes may have on your life. A blood test from your health care provider can determine if you have diabetes. Early treatment can prevent serious problems diabetes can cause, such as loss of eyesight or kidney damage.

When your blood sugar is higher than normal but not high enough yet to be diagnosed as type 2 diabetes you may be at risk for prediabetes. Prediabetes is a serious health condition that increases the risk of developing type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and stroke. Eighty-six million American adults have prediabetes. Nine out of 10 people with prediabetes don’t know they have it. Fortunately, making healthy lifestyle choices can delay or prevent type 2 diabetes and other serious health problems. A simple blood sugar test to find out if you have prediabetes. Talk to your health care provider if you should be tested.

Through federal grants, the department works with several partners across the state to increase availability and access to evidence-based programs such as Diabetes Prevention Programs (DPP) and Diabetes Self-Management Education Support (DSMES). During November, the department will host awareness campaigns across the state. For more information on these efforts, please contact the Bureau of Chronic Disease Prevention at (850) 245-4330.

To learn more about diabetes prevention and self-management, visit [www.floridahealth.gov/diabetes](http://www.floridahealth.gov/diabetes)

For more information about National Diabetes Month, visit [International Diabetes Federation](#) [American Diabetes Association](#) [National Diabetes Month 2018 Toolkit](#)

### **About the Florida Department of Health**

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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