



Diabetes – Taking Control

Diabetes is becoming an epidemic in this country. Many people each year are being diagnosed with diabetes, and for each new person diagnosed there are many more that are undiagnosed and untreated. In fact, a little over 9% of people in Berrien County (about 9,600 people) have been diagnosed with diabetes, which is a higher rate than the state of Michigan or the country. The American

Diabetes Association estimates that about one third of people with the disease are not diagnosed and are not being treated. Diabetes is a chronic disease, and it does not just go away. Finding out you have diabetes can be scary and maybe make you feel angry. Maybe you did not want to believe it so you began to deny having it and wouldn't check your blood sugar. But having uncontrolled

high blood sugar for a long time can lead to heart disease, kidney disease, eye disease, decrease sensation in your feet and hands, slow healing sores and gum disease. Yes, this disease comes with a long list of complications; however, diabetes can be controlled and the complications can be avoided. People with diabetes can live long, healthy and happy lives simply by **TAKING CONTROL!**

KNOW YOUR NUMBERS: Blood Glucose Monitoring

Self-monitoring (this means you checking your blood sugar with your blood glucose meter) is a very important part of your diabetes. Self-monitoring puts you in charge and it gives you immediate feedback on how well or not well your diabetes care program is working. How often you test should be decided

On the average, blood glucose management goals should be, in mg/dl*:

Fasting	80-120
Before meals	90-130
2 hrs after meals:	below 180
Bedtime	100-140

*Consult your healthcare provider for more information on your blood glucose levels.

between you and your healthcare professional, but testing often and recording your results in a log book will give you a better idea of how different foods or exercise affect your blood sugar levels. It will also help you determine if your diabetes medication is working. You can test at different times of the day or on different days, the important thing is that you test, test, test!

KNOW YOUR LETTERS: the ABC's of Diabetes

A=A1C (hemoglobin A1C) this number should be less than 7% and for some less than 6%. The A1C is a 2 to 3 month blood glucose average, and is a blood test your healthcare professional has to order for you. It shows a good picture of how effective your diabetes management is working.



tion is not working,, please talk to your healthcare professional.

C=Cholesterol. Cholesterol is the amount of "fatty substance" in your blood. If your numbers are high, then it can lead to heart attacks and strokes. You can have your healthcare professional order a blood test called a lipid panel to check your cholesterol level.

In general, cholesterol goals for diabetics should be*:

Triglycerides	less than 150 mg/dl
HDL (good) cholesterol	more than 40 mg/dl
LDL (bad) cholesterol	less than 100 mg/dl
Total cholesterol	less than 200 mg/dl

*Always discuss your cholesterol level with your healthcare provider.

B=Blood pressure. Blood pressure goals for people with diabetes should be less than 130/80 mmhg. If you are not sure if you have high blood pressure, then talk with your healthcare professional. If you have high blood pressure and your medi-

Special thanks to Debra Green for her help with this article!

The Berrien County Health Department has five locations to serve you:

Benton Harbor

769 Pipestone
P.O. Box 706
926-7121

M-139 Office
2106 S. M-139
927-5623

School Based
870 Colfax Ave
925-4500

Niles

1205 N. Front St.
684-2800

Three Oaks

21 N. Elm
756-2008

Or visit us on the web at www.berriencohlthdept.org

Berrien County Health

Department:
Preventing Disease,
Prolonging Life and
Protecting the
Health of the
Community.



March is Reduce Your Risk Month!

March is Reduce Your Risk month, and the Health Department will bring your articles about reducing your risk of the following: Huffing, Diabetes, Sexually Transmitted Diseases, and HIV. For questions about any of these topics, please call the health department at **926-7121**.

Living With Diabetes

Living with diabetes can be challenging. Some days are harder than others to stay on top of self monitoring, but its worth it. **Knowing your numbers** is a small part of taking control of your diabetes. Remember, you also need to develop a healthy eating program that is lower in fat and cholesterol. Having a good nutritional program will help lower your blood sugar. When you maintain your blood sugar as close to a normal level as possible you will feel much better. It's also a good idea to be aware of the serving sizes of all the foods you eat. If you are a person with diabetes and are overweight, losing weight can help lower your blood sugar levels. Also, exercise is a great way to help lower your blood sugar, and exercising can be a family affair. **Everyone** should exercise on the average of 3 days a week for 30 minutes, so get off the couch and **WALK!**



For more information about diabetes, contact the Health Department at 296-7121.

This page is sponsored by the Berrien County Health Department

