



California Department of Public Health

California Diabetes Program Fact Sheet

The mission of the California Diabetes Program is to prevent diabetes and its complications in California's diverse communities. The program was established in 1981 and is part of the California Department of Public Health. It is primarily funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). California has one of the top-performing state diabetes programs in the nation and serves as a coordinating leader to:

- Improve the quality of care in **Health Care Delivery Systems**
- Provide **Communications** to increase awareness about diabetes
- Offer leadership, guidance, and resources for **Community Health Interventions**
- Conduct **Surveillance** to monitor statewide diabetes health status and risk factors
- Guide **Public Policy** to support people with and at risk for diabetes.

The program is guided by national objectives and statewide goals, as well as community input. It focuses its efforts on health care systems and providers, as access to health care and self-management education are critical for people with diabetes. Since diabetes prevalence is higher in non-White populations, reducing health disparities is also a priority.

Scientific evidence indicates that keeping blood glucose (sugar) in a normal range can prevent the development of diabetes-related complications. Lifestyle changes, including losing weight and engaging in regular, moderate-intensity physical activity, can prevent or delay the onset of type 2 diabetes. The program works with partners to promote healthy lifestyles, diabetes screening, and the use of clinical guidelines to ensure comprehensive, evidence-based diabetes care and management. Diabetes care guidelines recommend regular Hemoglobin A1C tests, which measure blood glucose over time, as well as eye and foot exams to detect complications. Flu and pneumococcal vaccinations are also promoted because people with diabetes are at higher risk for severe illness if they develop the flu or pneumonia. Fortunately, with proper care and management, diabetes can be controlled and complications averted.

What is diabetes?

- Diabetes is a chronic medical condition marked by high levels of blood glucose resulting from defects in insulin production, insulin action, or both.¹ There are several types of diabetes.
 - Type 1 diabetes, previously known as juvenile diabetes, is an autoimmune disease where the body does not produce the hormone insulin. There is no known way to prevent type 1 diabetes.
 - Type 2 diabetes, previously known as adult-onset diabetes, is a metabolic disease where the body does not make enough insulin or use it effectively. Type 2 diabetes can be prevented or delayed by maintaining a healthy weight and exercising regularly.
 - Prediabetes is a condition that raises the risk of developing type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and stroke. People with prediabetes have blood glucose levels higher than normal but not high enough to be classified as diabetes.
 - Gestational diabetes occurs in pregnant women who have never had diabetes before but have higher than normal blood glucose levels during pregnancy.
- Diabetes is the leading cause of blindness, amputations, and kidney failure, and is a contributor to heart attacks and strokes.¹

- Diabetes is the 6th leading cause of death in the nation. Overall, the risk for death among people with diabetes is about twice that of people of similar age without diabetes.¹

What are the risk factors for type 2 diabetes?

- Overweight or obese
- Family history
- Over 45 years old
- Having a baby over 9 pounds
- Physical inactivity
- Part of a minority ethnic group
- High blood pressure
- History of gestational diabetes

How many Californians have diabetes?

- The number of people diagnosed with diabetes was 2.5 million in 2006 (8.2 percent of the adult population).² Of these, 600,000 adults are estimated to have undiagnosed diabetes.¹
- From 1996 to 2006, the total number of persons in California estimated to have diabetes rose from 1.8 million to 2.5 million, representing a 40 percent increase in total prevalence.²
- Type 1 diabetes accounts for 5 to 10 percent of all diagnosed cases of diabetes.¹
- Type 2 diabetes accounts for 90 to 95 percent of all diagnosed cases of diabetes.¹
- An estimated 5.4 million adults had prediabetes in 2002.¹
- In 2006, about 3 percent of women reported having a history of gestational diabetes.²

What is the prevalence of diabetes in California among different populations?

- 1.3 million adult men and 1.2 million adult women have diabetes.²
- In 2006, 13 percent of adult Hispanics had diabetes, as did 12 percent of Blacks, 9 percent of Asians, 11 percent of American Indians/Alaska Natives/Pacific Islanders, 6 percent of Whites, and 13 percent of people with other racial backgrounds.²
- Diabetes prevalence is highest among those with low income and the least education.^{2,3}

How much does diabetes cost the state of California annually?

- Total health care and related costs for the treatment of diabetes is about \$24.5 billion.⁴
- Of this total, direct medical costs (e.g., hospitalizations, medical care, treatment supplies) account for about \$18.7 billion.⁴
- The other \$5.8 billion includes indirect costs such as disability payments, time lost from work, and premature death.⁴

¹. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *National Diabetes Fact Sheet*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2006. National averages used to provide California estimates.

². Estimates are provided by California Diabetes Program using data from California Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 1997-2006.

³. California Health Interview Survey (CHIS), 2005.

⁴. Coffey R, et al. *Diabetes Care Quality Improvement: A Resource Guide for State Action*. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, AHRQ publication No. 04-0072, September 2004.

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Find more information on the Diabetes Information Resource Center (DIRC) at www.caldiabetes.org