

The Alarm Went Off,

Diabetes Type 2 May be in Your Horizon!

March, has been designated Diabetes Alert Month. Why alert? Diabetes is a medical condition characterized by abnormally high (and this is not good) levels of sugar in blood. A million citizens in Florida carry a diagnosis of Diabetes. Four hundred thousand more have no idea that they have Diabetes, and another large group will have Diabetes soon due to a combination of lack of activity, faulty eating habits, and excessive fat weight for height. Diabetes can affect children and teens also. Diabetes is not a laughing matter. It accelerates cardiovascular diseases of those with poor control of blood sugars. It needs to be addressed and monitored to prevent serious complication like heart disease, stroke, foot/leg amputations, some diseases of the kidney, nerves and eyes. Weights and balances in nutrition choices, some physical activity, and medication are necessary for success in the control of the blood sugars.

How do you know if you have Diabetes?

A specific blood test can tell if you have Diabetes. Nevertheless, there are some symptoms that show when your sugars are higher than normal. They are called red flags. These red flags are: frequent urination, constant hunger, increased thirst, tiredness, blurry vision, numbness of hands and or feet, wounds that won't heal and in some people, unexpected weight loss. People at risk of Diabetes are overweight, do little or no exercise, over 45 years of age, have a parent, sister or brother with Diabetes, and women who have had a baby weighting more than nine pounds at birth. Children and teens that are overweight are also at risk. Get tested.

Where can I learn more?

To learn more about Diabetes in general, the nutrition aspects of Diabetes, prevention or delay of Diabetes Type 2, log on to www.americanheart.org/diabetes.

Closing the Gap in Diabetes, a Program in the Osceola County Health Department, offer education and screenings. People with Diabetes or at risk of Diabetes, benefit greatly by the education provided by the staff. The group sessions are offered in English and Spanish. Other topics of interest are: weight management, hypertension, high cholesterol, and since September, a program for children, teens and their families to address excessive weight and inactivity. Closing The Gap also sponsors a walking and strength and fitness program. For information call (407) 343-2082. The services are without cost to the community.

Any nutrition tips?

Most people benefit from three meals a day. Some may need healthy snacks to avoid the blood sugars getting too low. A regular eating schedule is a must. Choose healthy items all over. Go easy on fruits, juices, grains, and products with excessive amounts of sugars and starch. Vegetables that are not starchy should be included daily. The starchy vegetables like pumpkin, peas; corn should be substituted for the items that are starchy like rice, pasta or bread in your meal. Reduce saturated fats from milk, cheese, and most animal products. Fatty fish like salmon is actually good

for health as well as nuts. Use canola and olive oils more often. And drink plenty of water as part of your daily routine. Want more?, come to the group sessions!

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