Community Health Plan
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

Health News

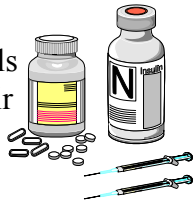
L.A. Care
HEALTH PLAN

Community Health Plan

Diabetes

– Despite all the advances in diabetes research, there is still no cure for it. So, the key to good health for people who have diabetes is to control it.

– People with diabetes, cannot just take pills or insulin in the morning, then forget their health the rest of the day.



– Diet, exercise levels, stress and other factors may affect blood sugar levels. Thus, the more people with diabetes learn how these factors affect them, the better control they can achieve.

What is Diabetes?

– Diabetes is a disease in which the body does not use sugar (glucose) properly.

– Glucose is made from the food we eat.

– Glucose travels in the blood and is used as energy for the body.

– In order for the body to use glucose, insulin is needed.

– Insulin, a hormone secreted by the pancreas, allows glucose to get inside the cells.

– In type I (one) diabetes, the pancreas produces little or no insulin.

– In type II (two) diabetes, the body fails to use the insulin produced by the pancreas.

– A person with diabetes has a greater chance of having a heart attack, stroke, blindness or kidney disease than a person who does not have diabetes.

What are the Signs and Symptoms of Diabetes?

– Frequent urination
– Hungry all the time
– Extreme fatigue
– Headaches
– Very thirsty
– Unusual weight loss
– Blurred vision
– Craving for sweets
– Cuts/bruises that are slow to heal
– Tingling/numbness in the hands and feet
– Repeating skin, gum, or bladder infections

Taking Care of Diabetes

Patients with diabetes can prevent or decrease the risk of complications of diabetes. If you have diabetes, you can manage the disease by doing the following:

– Develop a meal plan that includes the kind of food you should eat, amount, how often and when you should eat.

– If you use medication (pills or insulin), take it as your doctor has told you.

– Exercise regularly. Make sure you talk to your doctor before you start any exercise program.

– Check your blood sugar level regularly.

– Learn about diabetes as much as you can and follow your doctor's advice.

Remember... Good control can help people prevent complications of diabetes related to the heart, eyes, kidneys and nerves.

This newsletter should not be considered specific medical advice, as each circumstance is different. If you need medical advice, talk to your doctor and do not rely on knowledge gained from this information. Community Health Plan/Health Education and Promotion Unit, 1999.

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