

# Diabetes & You

## Controlling Blood Sugar Levels

(NAPSA)—When American Diabetes Month is “celebrated” each year, it is a month-long call-to-action to encourage people who have diabetes to take a proactive approach in their care. Approximately 17 million people in the United States, or 6.2 percent of the population, have diabetes. Add the 16 million or so with pre-diabetes, and the disease can easily be counted as epidemic in this country.

Diabetes is a disease in which the body does not produce or properly use insulin. Insulin is a hormone that is needed to convert sugar, starches and other food into energy needed for daily life. The cause of diabetes continues to be a mystery, although both genetics and environmental factors, such as obesity and lack of exercise, appear to play roles.

According to the American Diabetes Association, there are three major types of diabetes:

- Type 1 diabetes results from the body’s failure to produce insulin, the hormone that “unlocks” the cells of the body, allowing glucose to enter and fuel them. There are an estimated 1.7 million people in the U.S. with type 1 diabetes.

- Type 2 diabetes results from insulin resistance, a condition in which the body fails to make enough or properly use insulin, combined with relative insulin deficiency. Approximately 16 million people suffer from type 2 diabetes.

- Gestational diabetes is a temporary side effect of pregnancy, that affects about 135,000 women each year.

Many people with diabetes live long, healthy lives by maintaining their blood sugar levels within a

### To qualify for the Share Card, a patient must:

1. Be a Medicare enrollee;
2. Have individual reported gross income below \$18,000, or joint reported gross income below \$24,000;
3. Have no other prescription coverage; and
4. Not be eligible for Medicaid or any other publicly funded prescription benefit program.



specific target range by adopting a series of positive lifestyle changes. These include the development of a regimented meal plan, regular exercise and weight loss. However, at times, using a meal plan, losing weight and remaining active are not enough. A physician may have to prescribe diabetes prescription medicines, insulin shots or both. Patients also need to check their blood sugar levels regularly with blood glucose meters and testing strips.

In an effort to help Medicare-enrolled, low-income seniors better manage their health care within a limited budget, Pfizer has created the Pfizer for Living Share Card™ program. The Share Card enables qualified seniors to purchase up to a 30-day supply of most Pfizer medicines, which include some of the most prescribed treatments for high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes, for a flat fee of \$15 per prescription. The program also provides members with easy-to-read health information on 16 common medical conditions and a toll-free help line with live operators.

Share Card applications are available by calling 1-800-717-6005 and additional information is available at [www.pfizerforliving.com](http://www.pfizerforliving.com).