

# Health Awareness

## Actress and Singer Della Reese is Stronger than Diabetes

(NAPSA)—Gospel legend and Emmy Award-nominated actress Della Reese is sharing for the first time details about her battle with type 2 diabetes, a disease that affects 16 million Americans. After



Della Reese

empowering herself to learn about this disease, she is now better managing it, and wants to share her knowledge with others who have type 2 diabetes. As such, Della is spearheading a national educational campaign called “Della Reese: Stronger Than Diabetes,” sponsored by GlaxoSmithKline, designed to educate people with type 2 diabetes and their caregivers about the importance of long-term diabetes management to help limit the potential of long-term complications such as heart attack, stroke and blindness.

Type 2 diabetes is a disease characterized by high blood sugar levels, which occur when the body cannot make enough insulin or does not respond normally to the insulin it makes, a condition called insulin resistance. Insulin resistance, which affects approximately 60 million Americans, is a major underlying cause of type 2 diabetes. In fact, 25 percent of people who are insulin resistant will go on to develop type 2 diabetes.

“When I found out I had type 2 diabetes I felt worried about my future, since many of my friends had died from complications of diabetes,” said Della. “But I now know that with aggressive disease management, it doesn’t have to be that way. I believe that knowledge is power when it comes to fighting

### Della’s Tips for Managing Type 2 Diabetes:

- Talk about it—now! Ask your healthcare professional about aggressively managing your diabetes and insulin resistance, a major underlying cause of the disease.
- Keep a healthy, balanced meal plan. There’s no single, “right” diabetes diet. Work with your healthcare professional to develop a plan suited to your personal needs.
- Get moving. After talking to your doctor, start a physical activity program that incorporates your everyday activities, like walking the dog, gardening or taking the stairs. Exercise can help with weight loss, as well as reducing insulin resistance levels.
- Set goals. Test your blood sugar levels regularly. Also, to make sure you’re in control, have your doctor test your A1C level (a marker of long-term blood sugar control). The American Diabetes Association recommended target A1C level is less than 7 percent.
- Stick with it. Follow your recommended meal plan, stay active and, where appropriate, take the medication as prescribed by your healthcare professional. If you don’t, you may be at risk for serious complications.



People interested in learning more about type 2 diabetes can receive a one-of-a-kind copy of *Take Della’s Challenge: Be Stronger Than Diabetes*, a booklet filled with quick tips and true-life advice on managing type 2 diabetes and Della’s favorite diabetes-friendly recipes, as well as a free motivational music CD to encourage a more active lifestyle featuring one of Della Reese’s songs. The free booklet and the CD can be obtained by calling toll-free 1-866-INFODIABETES (463-6342) or by visiting [www.delladiabetes.com](http://www.delladiabetes.com).

this disease, which is why I am speaking out.”

Della Reese began her career at the age of six as a gospel singer and since then, her music has inspired people for decades. Perhaps best known for her role on the hit television series “Touched By An Angel,” Della continued to inspire fans as “Tess,” the stern but lovable guardian angel. Now, she is taking on one of her most important “roles” as the spokesperson for the “Della Reese: Stronger Than Diabetes” campaign. After being diagnosed with type 2 diabetes several years ago, Della hopes to motivate others to take action by talking to their doctor about aggressive diabetes management. Most important, she has learned that having type 2 diabetes doesn’t

mean the end of her life. By staying active, eating right and taking medication as prescribed by her physician, including those that target insulin resistance, Della feels that she can be stronger than diabetes.

“Della Reese is a great role model for people with type 2 diabetes because she not only took action to learn about this disease, but also—and more importantly—made necessary lifestyle changes to keep her blood sugar levels in control,” said Steven Edelman, M.D., Professor of Medicine in the Division of Endocrinology and Metabolism at the University of California at San Diego and Veterans Affairs Medical Center, and director of a non-profit organization called Taking Control of Your Diabetes.