



# HEALTH MATTERS

## New Medicare Services For Older Adults With Diabetes

(NAPSA)—If you are an older adult living with diabetes (or care for someone who is), you know that it is a serious disease that affects every day of your life and nearly every part of the body. What you also need to know is that you may be eligible for two new services—Diabetes Self-Management Training and Medical Nutrition Therapy—that give YOU the power to control your diabetes on a daily basis. Medicare, a national health insurance program for people age 65 and older, has expanded its coverage to include the two new programs.

Diabetes Self-Management Training, which must be prescribed by a doctor, will teach you how to manage your blood glucose (blood sugar), make appropriate choices about nutrition and exercise, and prevent and treat complications of diabetes. Medicare will help cover 10 hours of training in an approved program, plus an additional two hours of follow-up training annually.

Medical Nutrition Therapy, which also must be prescribed by a doctor, will help you make informed food choices, which can help you feel better physically and can lower your chances of serious health problems. A registered dietitian or other nutrition professional will review your personal eating habits, suggest foods that are most beneficial, explain how to manage lifestyle factors that affect your food choices and check your progress with follow-up visits. Medicare will help cover three hours of prescribed medical nutrition therapy (individual or group) during the first year and an addi-



**Many Americans are eligible for two new services—Diabetes Self-Management Training and Medical Nutrition Therapy—that give them the power to control diabetes.**

tional two hours of follow-up services annually—with more hours available via prescription if your condition, diagnosis or treatment changes.

Your health care provider will be able to give you information about where to get Medicare-approved Diabetes Self-Management Training and whom to contact for Medical Nutrition Therapy. You may also check with the American Diabetes Association at 1-800-342-2383 or visit its Web site at [www.diabetes.org/education/eduprogram.asp](http://www.diabetes.org/education/eduprogram.asp) to find an approved training program. Contact the American Dietetic Association at 1-800-366-1655 or [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org) (click “Find a Nutrition Professional”) to find a nutrition professional.

American Indians can turn to programs approved by the Indian Health Service. Tribal medical services can explain availabilities.

Want to learn more? A free,

easy-to-read fact sheet from the National Diabetes Education Program describing the two new, Medicare-covered services is available in both English and Spanish. To get a copy, call 1-800-860-8747 or visit <http://www.ndep.nih.gov/diabetes/pubs/catalog.htm>.

Keep in mind that Medicare (part B) helps pay for other doctor-prescribed services and supplies for people with diabetes, in addition to the new Self-Management Training and Medical Nutritional Therapy, including blood glucose monitors and supplies, the hemoglobin A1C test (also called A1C), dilated eye exams to check for diabetic eye diseases, glaucoma screening and shots to protect you from flu and pneumonia.

Remember, taking control of your diabetes can help you feel better and stay healthy. To keep your diabetes under control, eat the right foods in the right amounts, get regular physical activity and take prescribed medicines. And to lower your risk for heart attack and stroke, ask your doctor if you should take an aspirin daily and how to manage the “ABCs of diabetes”:

- **A** is for the A1C test, which tests the average blood glucose over the past two to three months (suggested target: below seven percent)

- **B** is for Blood Pressure (goal for most people: below 130/80)

- **C** is for Cholesterol (goal for most people is to keep the LDL or “bad” cholesterol below 100)

You can take control today. Order a free fact sheet and ask your doctor about your target numbers and the new Medicare-covered services.