



HEALTH AWARENESS

Buddying Up To Reduce Your Risk Of Type 2 Diabetes And Heart Disease

(NAPSA)—Type 2 diabetes currently affects nearly 20 million Americans, and that number grows each year. For people with diabetes, cardiovascular disease (including heart disease and stroke) is the leading cause of death. While many people are aware of the risk factors connecting diabetes and cardiovascular disease, few make lifestyle changes to help manage these conditions.

The buddy system can help keep people motivated and ease the transition into regular physical activity and healthy eating habits. That's the idea behind a program that suggests people with type 2 diabetes can better manage their disease by working with a friend who also has the condition.

The American Heart Association's *The Heart Of Diabetes* program is supported by research showing that patients working together can be more successful in making lifestyle changes than patients working on their own.

The program also helps educate people with type 2 diabetes about the association between cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and insulin resistance.

People with type 2 diabetes have heart disease death rates two to four times higher than adults without diabetes. A variety of risk factors, such as high blood pressure, high levels of LDL (bad) cholesterol and being overweight increase the risk for cardiovascular disease.

"There is a huge discrepancy between awareness and action among patients with type 2 diabetes," said Anjanette Ferris, M.D., of Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center, in New York City. "A clear need



Research suggests that working with a friend can help people manage type 2 diabetes.

exists for a program like *The Heart Of Diabetes*, which can empower people with the tools they need to make lifestyle modifications related to diabetes and cardiovascular risk factors including obesity, physical inactivity and high blood pressure."

The Heart Of Diabetes encourages people with type 2 diabetes to get regular physical activity, eat a healthy diet and manage their cholesterol levels to reduce associated risks and avoid developing cardiovascular disease. The program includes a variety of free tools, such as the "Game Plan To A Healthy Life" journal. The journal contains a plan for physical activity in which people can also track glucose and cholesterol levels, weight and blood pressure—all designed to help people make healthy choices every day.

The American Heart Association's *Heart Of Diabetes* program is sponsored by an educational grant from Takeda Pharmaceuticals and Eli Lilly and Company. For more information on the program, call 1-800-AHA-USA1 or visit www.americanheart.org/diabetes.