

Diabetes & You

Use the ABCs to Combat Diabetes' Biggest Risk

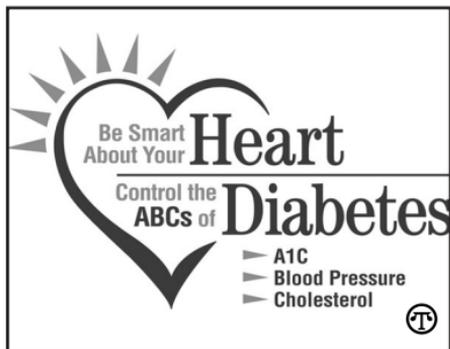
(NAPSA)—There are steps you can take to protect yourself from the consequences of diabetes. Seventy-five percent of people with diabetes die from heart attacks and strokes—and many die younger than the rest of the population. Most people know that people with diabetes must control their blood sugar. Now it's known that managing blood pressure and cholesterol is just as important. This news can help the 16 million Americans with diabetes protect their hearts and live longer, healthier lives.

"If you have diabetes, you are at a very high risk for heart attack and stroke. But you can take control and lower your risk by managing blood glucose, blood pressure and cholesterol," said Dr. Allen M. Spiegel, who directs the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases of the National Institutes of Health.

Based on new scientific studies showing a dramatic link between diabetes and heart disease, the National Diabetes Education Program (NDEP) has launched a nationwide campaign to help people learn how to "Be Smart About Your Heart: Control the ABCs of Diabetes." The urgency of this campaign is underscored by the latest statistics showing that diabetes among adults increased by 49 percent from 1990 to 2000.

A is for A1C: The A1C (A-one-C) test—short for hemoglobin A1C—measures your average blood glucose (sugar) over the last 3 months. Target number: below 7.

B is for blood pressure: High blood pressure makes your heart work too hard. Target number: below 130/80.



C is for cholesterol: LDL (the bad cholesterol) builds up and clogs your arteries. Target LDL number: below 100.

New research also shows that people with diabetes can live longer and healthier lives with relatively small improvements in these three critical areas.

To assist people with diabetes and members of their health care teams in managing the ABCs of Diabetes, the National Diabetes Education Program and the American Diabetes Association are distributing a new brochure for people with diabetes that includes a wallet card to help them track their ABC numbers. The brochure includes recommended A1C, blood pressure and cholesterol targets, questions to discuss with health care providers, and action-steps to lower the risk for heart attack and stroke and other diabetes problems.

To get the free brochure with wallet card and to learn more about diabetes, call 1-800-438-5383 or visit NDEP's Web site at <http://ndep.nih.gov>. The NDEP is a joint initiative of the National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.