



The Maryland State Medical Society

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NOVEMBER IS AMERICAN DIABETES MONTH; FOCUS ON MAKING SMALL HEALTHY CHANGES

BALTIMORE, November 21, 2024 — In recognition of American Diabetes Month, MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, is raising awareness about diabetes risk factors and encouraging people to make healthy changes.

Diabetes is a chronic condition that significantly impacts how your body converts food into energy. When you eat, most of the food is broken down into sugar (glucose) and released into your bloodstream. Your pancreas produces a hormone called insulin, which helps glucose enter your cells to be used for energy. However, if you have diabetes, your body either doesn't produce enough insulin or can't use the insulin it makes effectively.

There are two main types of diabetes:

- Type 1 Diabetes is due to the body's inability to produce insulin. It is often diagnosed in children and young adults, and managing it requires regular insulin injections.
- Type 2 Diabetes is primarily caused by insulin resistance, often linked to being overweight or obese. It is more common in adults but is increasingly seen in younger populations due to rising obesity rates.

Diabetes is one of the leading causes of disability and death in the United States. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), more than 1 in 3 U.S. adults are prediabetic, yet many are unaware of their condition. The encouraging news is that making healthy lifestyle changes can significantly reduce your risk of developing diabetes or even reverse prediabetes.

By adopting these healthy habits, you can take proactive steps towards preventing type 2 diabetes and improving your overall well-being:

- Avoid concentrated sweets and sugary beverages such as soda, juice, and sports drinks.
- Achieve and maintain a healthy weight through well balanced eating and regular physical activity.
- Steer clear of processed foods or those with a long list of ingredients, as they often contain unhealthy additives and preservatives.
- Make small, sustainable changes like taking regular walks and taking the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Schedule regular check-ups with your physician to monitor blood sugar, blood pressure, cholesterol levels and discuss what steps that you might take to prevent diabetes and other chronic diseases.

Padmini Ranasinghe, M.D., MPH, FACP, FACPM, FSHM, new President of MedChi, adds “this month is a great time to talk with your doctor about making a diabetes care plan if you haven’t already done so. Managing diabetes as soon as possible after diagnosis can help prevent serious health problems.”

About MedChi

MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, is a non-profit membership association of Maryland physicians. It is the largest physician organization in Maryland. The mission of MedChi is to serve as Maryland's foremost advocate and resource for physicians, their patients and the public health of Maryland. For more information, please visit www.medchi.org.