

**Diabetes is a common, serious, and costly disease, but it is controllable. In many cases, it is also preventable.**

## WHAT IS DIABETES?

Diabetes is a group of diseases marked by high blood glucose levels due to defects in insulin production, insulin action, or both. Diabetes can cause serious complications and premature death, but people with diabetes can take steps to control the disease and lower the risk of complications.<sup>1</sup>

## TYPES OF DIABETES

**Type 1 diabetes** develops when the body's immune system destroys pancreatic beta cells—the only cells in the body that make the hormone insulin that regulates blood glucose levels. To survive, people with type 1 diabetes must have insulin delivered by injection or a pump. This form of diabetes usually strikes children and young adults, although disease onset can occur at any age. Type 1 diabetes accounts for 5% to 10% of all diagnosed cases of diabetes.

**Type 2 diabetes** usually begins as insulin resistance, a disorder in which the body cells cannot use insulin properly. As the need for insulin rises, the pancreas gradually loses its ability to produce insulin. Type 2 diabetes is the most common form, accounting for 90% to 95% of all diagnosed cases of diabetes.

**Gestational diabetes** is a form of glucose intolerance that occurs in 4% to 7% of all pregnancies. Women who have had gestational diabetes have a 20% to 50% chance of developing diabetes in the next 5 to 10 years.

**Other types** of diabetes result from specific genetic conditions, surgery, drugs, infections, malnutrition, and other illnesses, accounting for 1% to 5% of all diagnosed cases.<sup>1</sup>

## PREVALENCE

***Diabetes is a common disease in Georgia.***

- In 2006, approximately **608,000 (9.1%)** adults aged 18 years and older of the Georgia adult population reported that they had been diagnosed with diabetes.

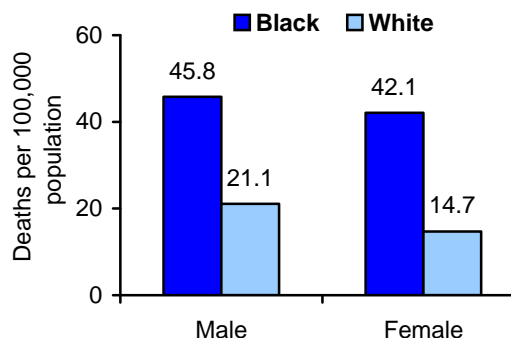
- For every two persons with diabetes who have been diagnosed, another has not yet been diagnosed. Thus, approximately **304,000** additional adult Georgians are estimated to have undiagnosed diabetes.
- Thousands more are at increased risk of getting diabetes because of aging, obesity, unhealthy eating habits, and physical inactivity.

## MORTALITY

***Diabetes is a serious disease in Georgia.***

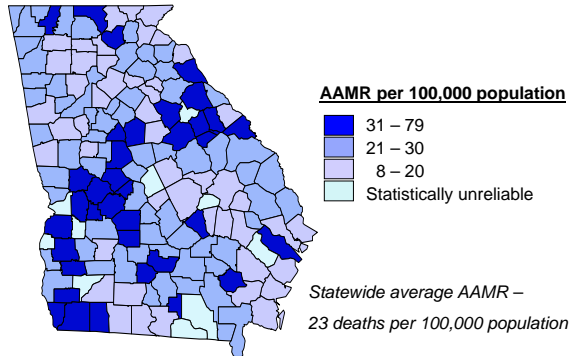
- In 2005, diabetes was the seventh leading cause of death, killing **1,717** Georgians, equivalent to almost 5 deaths every day.
- For every death with diabetes as a primary cause, there are two other deaths in which diabetes is a contributing cause.
- In 2005, the age-adjusted death rate per 100,000 population was **1.2 times higher** in men (**25.5**) than in women (**20.7**). The rate was also **2.5 times higher** among blacks (**44.0**) than among whites (**17.5**).
- About one-third of diabetes deaths are in persons under the age of 65. In 2005, the proportion of premature deaths due to diabetes was **highest** among black males (**51.0%**), followed by white males (**43.8%**), black females (**32.6%**), and white females (**23.7%**).

**Age-adjusted diabetes death rates by race and sex, Georgia, 2005**



- Georgia counties in Southwest, Central, and Northeast regions tend to have higher age-adjusted diabetes mortality rates than the statewide average from 1999 through 2005.<sup>2</sup>

**Age-adjusted mortality rates (AAMR) for diabetes by county  
Georgia, 1999-2005**



## MORBIDITY and ECONOMIC COSTS

### *Diabetes is a costly disease in Georgia.*

- Diabetes can contribute to blindness, kidney failure, amputations, heart disease, stroke, hypertension, nerve damage, impotence, skin disorders, periodontal disease, pregnancy complications, disability, and premature death.
- In 2005, there were **15,349** hospitalizations for which diabetes was the principal diagnosis, resulting in over **\$250 million** hospital charges and about **77,400 days** or **212 years** of hospital stay.
- In Georgia, the cost of diabetes due to medical care, lost productivity, and premature death is estimated to be over \$4 billion per year.
- The health care cost for a person with diabetes is approximately **\$13,200** per year compared with **\$2,600** per year for a person of comparable age without diabetes.<sup>3</sup>

## PREVENTIVE CARE MEASURES

- Many complications can be prevented with early detection, proper intervention, and comprehensive management.
- In 2006, adult Georgians with diabetes met only **two** national targets (Healthy People 2010 Objectives) for the recommended routine care for diabetes.

### Status of recommended routine care for persons with diabetes, Georgia, 2006

Minimum Recommendation	HP 2010 Objectives	Achievement
Annual doctor visit	---	89%
Diabetes education	60%	56%
Daily self glucose monitoring	60%	<b>62%</b>
Annual Hemoglobin A1c testing	50%	<b>84%</b>
Annual dilated eye exam	75%	65%
Annual foot exam	75%	73%
Annual influenza vaccination	60%	52%
Pneumococcal vaccination	60%	44%

#### Data sources:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National diabetes fact sheet, 2005.
- Georgia Division of Public Health, Office of Health Information & Policy. OASIS, 2007.
- American Diabetes Association. Economic costs of diabetes in the U.S. in 2002. Diabetes Care. 26: 927.

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Visit <http://www.health.state.ga.us/epi/cdiee/diabetes.asp> for more information about diabetes in Georgia.