

AMERICAN DIABETES MONTH

LIFESTYLE AFFECTS RISK OF DIABETES

Research has also shown that if you take action to manage your blood glucose when you have pre-diabetes, you can delay or prevent type 2 diabetes from ever developing.

Before people develop type 2 diabetes, they almost always have "pre-diabetes" - - blood glucose levels that are higher than normal but not yet high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes. There are 57 million people in the United States who have pre-diabetes. Recent research has shown that some long-term damage to the body, especially the heart and circulatory system, may already be occurring during pre-diabetes.

Type 2 diabetes is the most common form of diabetes. In type 2 diabetes, either the body does not produce enough insulin or the cells ignore the insulin. Insulin is necessary for the body to be able to use glucose for energy. When you eat food, the body breaks down all of the sugars and starches into glucose, which is the basic fuel for the cells in the body. Insulin takes the sugar from the blood into the cells. When glucose builds up in the blood instead of going into cells, it can cause two problems:

- Right away, your cells may be starved for energy.
- Over time, high blood glucose levels may hurt your eyes, kidneys, nerves or heart.

AvMed Health Plans offers a variety of options to aid members in identifying and treating pre-diabetic symptoms through our comprehensive on-site health screenings performed during a scheduled health fair. In addition to biometric screenings AvMed offers discounts on health club memberships, visits with alternative medicine practitioners, nutritionists and fitness professionals.

To locate an AvMed provider near your home visit our website directory of physicians.

DISEASE INFORMATION: EARLY DETECTION

There is a lot you can do yourself to know your risks for pre-diabetes and to take action to prevent diabetes if you have, or are at risk for, pre-diabetes. The American Diabetes Association has a wealth of resources for people with diabetes. People with pre-diabetes can expect to benefit from much of the same advice for good nutrition and physical activity. Visit the American Diabetes Associations website www.diabetes.org for more information.

LUNG CANCER **AWARENESS MONTH**

About 87% of lung cancer cases are caused by smoking. The lung cells of smokers go through changes that can lead to lung cancer. The longer people have been smoking, and the more packs per day they smoked, the greater their risk is of developing lung cancer. Former smokers are also at elevated risk for lung cancer.

There are over 40 million current smokers in the United States. Are you one of them? Have you tried quitting with little or no success? Have you quit smoking for a period of time and then started again during a stressful or emotional time in your life? Do you want to quit for good this time?

AvMed HEALTH PLANS: **SMOKING CESSATION** **PROGRAM**

In an effort to help AvMed Members take an important step toward a healthier lifestyle, AvMed offers the “SMOKENDERS” Program entitling members to reimbursement of the 125.00 registration fee upon successful completion of the program.

For detailed information call Member Services at 800-828-4357 or visit the AvMed website to learn how you can take the first step to quit smoking today!

NATIONAL HEALTHY SKIN **MONTH**

Sun exposure is the most preventable risk factor for all skin cancers, including

melanoma. You can have fun in the sun and decrease your risk of skin cancer. Here's how to be sun smart.

Generously apply a broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen with a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of at least 15 to all exposed skin. The term broad-spectrum means that the sunscreen provides protection from both ultraviolet A (UVA) and ultraviolet B (UVB) rays. Reapply every two hours — even on cloudy days — and after swimming or sweating.

Wear protective clothing, such as a long-sleeved shirt, pants, a wide-brimmed hat, and sunglasses, where possible.

Seek shade when appropriate. Remember that the sun's rays are strongest between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. If your shadow appears to be shorter than you are, seek shade.

Protect children from sun exposure. Be sure to play in the shade, use protective clothing, and apply sunscreen.

Use extra caution near water, snow, and sand because they reflect and intensify the damaging rays of the sun, which can increase your chances of sunburn.

Get vitamin D safely through a healthy diet that may include natural sources of vitamin D (spinach). Don't *seek* the sun.

Avoid tanning beds. Ultraviolet light from the sun and tanning beds can cause skin cancer and wrinkling. If you want to look like you've been in the sun, consider using a sunless self-tanning

product, but continue to use sunscreen with it.

Check your birthday suit on your birthday. If you notice anything changing, growing, or bleeding on your skin, see a dermatologist. Skin cancer is very treatable when caught early.

AvMed members have the opportunity to receive skin screenings at a health fair that can be arranged by contacting AvMed's Health Promotion Department or visiting AvMed's website for details and contact information.

The screening affords members an opportunity to detect dehydration and to identify any potential cause for concern that should be referred to their physician for a more extensive examination.

NOVEMBER 19TH GREAT AMERICAN SMOKE OUT

Many workplaces around the country are implementing smoke-free policies to provide clean indoor air and protect employees from the harmful effects of secondhand smoke. By implementing smoke-free policies and encouraging employees to become smoke-free, everyone benefits with potential increased productivity, fewer sick days, and lowered insurance claims. The increasing public support of smoke-free environments also makes the Great American Smokeout a perfect day to initiate new non-smoking policies.

Here are some ways your workplace can take part:

- Host No-Smoke Breaks or organized walks when everyone can take a fresh-air breather and relax, as they DON'T light up.
- Help pay for a membership to

a nearby health club for quitting smokers who are worried about stress and weight gain.

- Hold an informal breakfast for smokers and for adoptive non-smokers. Treat them with special American Cancer Society Great American Smokeout materials.
- Set up Smokeout stations where smokers can trade cigarettes or spit tobacco products for chewing gum, breath mints, carrot sticks, or pretzels to help them kick the habit.
- Where appropriate, promote the American Cancer Society cessation resources to employees at 1-800-ACS-2345.

PET PHOTO CONTEST WINNER

**“Meka the Elf”
Congratulations
Santa’s Little Helper
Submitted by
Elise
Burket**



WANT TO LEARN MORE?

*“Lifestyle Affects Risk
of Diabetes”*

www.diabetes.org

*“Disease Information -
Early Detection”*

www.diabetes.org

“Lung Cancer Awareness Month”

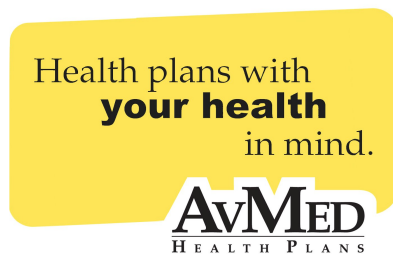
www.lungcanceralliance.org

“Great American Smoke Out”

www.acsf2f.org

“National Healthy Skin Month”

www.aad.org



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