



# DIABETES

*By: Marko Mijic, Region I Vice President*

Diseases seem to be all around us. Some diseases can be more common than others and some affect people differently than others. Overall, diseases affect our lives continuously and the Centers for Disease Control is the government affiliated agency that one might turn to for more information regarding a particular disease and how it is treated in the United States.

One of the most common diseases people talk about in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is Diabetes. This particular disease is characterized by the high levels of blood glucose from defects in insulin products, insulin action, or even both. Diabetes can be associated with serious complications and premature death, however, people with diabetes can take proper actions to lower their risks of any complications.

There are three main types of diabetes: Type 1 diabetes; Type 2 diabetes; and Gestational diabetes.

- Type 1 diabetes is called insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus (IDDM) and sometimes is referred as juvenile-onset diabetes. This type usually develops in the body when the immune system destroys the pancreatic beta cells. These pancreatic beta cells are the only cells in the body that make the hormone insulin which regulates our blood glucose. This particular diabetes is often seen in children and young adults.
- Type 2 diabetes is known as non-insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus (NIDDM) or adult-onset diabetes. This diabetes may account for an estimated 90% to 95% of all diagnosed cases of diabetes. This is the most common diabetes in the US and affects a large amount of people. It usually begins as an insulin resistant syndrome. This is a disorder in which the cells do not use insulin properly, therefore, the body does not function properly. Type 2 diabetes is associated with older age, obesity, family history of diabetes, history of gestational diabetes, impaired glucose metabolism, physical inactivity, and race/ethnicity. Those that are at high risk are African Americans, Hispanic/Latino Americans, American Indians, and some Asian Americans and Native Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders.
- The third type of diabetes is Gestational diabetes which is a form of glucose intolerance that is diagnosed in some women during pregnancy. This particular diabetes occurs most common in obese women and women with a family history of diabetes. During pregnancy gestational diabetes requires treatment to normalize maternal blood glucose levels to avoid complications in the infant.

It is obvious that diabetes is continually on a rise and is affecting the entire United States. As future health care professionals, we need to make sure that our communities are aware of the risks of diabetes and the proper actions that individuals need to take to ensure they live a healthy and safe life.

For more information:  
American Diabetes Association  
1701 North Beauregard Street  
Alexandria VA 22311  
Telephone 703-549-1500  
1-800-ADA-ORDER to order publications toll free  
1-800-342-2383 (800-DIABETES) for diabetes information  
Internet <http://www.diabetes.org>

