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**LIFESTYLE CHANGES ESPECIALLY EFFECTIVE
AT PREVENTING TYPE 2 DIABETES IN ADULTS AGED 60 AND OLDER**
New Awareness Campaign Says "It's Not Too Late" to Prevent the Disease

JACKSONVILLE, FL – About 40 percent of adults ages 40 to 74 – or 41 million people – have pre-diabetes, a condition that raises a person's risk for developing type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and stroke. Studies show that while adults over 60 are at increased risk for type 2 diabetes, losing a small amount of weight and increasing physical activity is especially effective in reducing that risk among this age group.

To spread the word that diabetes prevention for older adults is proven and possible, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) National Diabetes Education Program (NDEP) launched a public awareness campaign today called "It's Not Too Late to Prevent Diabetes. Take Your First Step Today" at the Yates Family YMCA in Jacksonville, Florida. The campaign delivers the message that type 2 diabetes can be prevented or delayed.

"It's Not Too Late to Prevent Diabetes" is part of NDEP's *Small Steps. Big Rewards. Prevent type 2 Diabetes* campaign that targets groups at high risk for diabetes. Tailored specifically for older adults, "It's Not Too Late..." encourages adults over 60 that modest lifestyle changes can yield big rewards in preventing or delaying the onset of type 2 diabetes.

"We are asking older adults to find out if they are at risk for type 2 diabetes, and we're showing them how to take action to prevent it," said Dr. James R. Gavin III, Chair of the NDEP. "Older adults may not realize that they still have time to prevent diabetes, or that diabetes prevention is even possible. That's why the 'It's Not Too Late' campaign is so important."

HHS' Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP), a recent study involving Americans from all over the country, showed that type 2 diabetes can be delayed or even prevented by losing a small amount of weight by following a low-fat, low-calorie meal plan and getting 30 minutes of physical activity five times per week. These lifestyle interventions worked particularly well in people aged 60 and older, reducing the development of diabetes by 71 percent.

Florida native Sam Kitching participated in the campaign launch as a member of NDEP's *Small Steps. Big Rewards. Team to Prevent type 2 Diabetes*. This group of committed citizens was assembled by NDEP to put a human face on the populations that are at high risk for the disease. Each member is actively working in his or her community to demonstrate lifestyle changes they have made to prevent or delay diabetes.

“I adopted a healthy lifestyle and made the commitment to inform my family and friends that it’s not too late for people my age to prevent type 2 diabetes,” said Mr. Kitching. “Even small steps, like eating healthier foods and taking an afternoon walk can make a big difference,” he said.

The “It’s Not Too Late to Prevent Diabetes” campaign includes radio and print public service advertisements, tip sheets, and posters. Materials are also available on the NDEP website at www.ndep.nih.gov.

“The YMCA of Florida’s First Coast is proud to be hosting the national launch of this important public health campaign,” said Thomas “Trigg” Wilkes, CEO. “We are the community’s source for programs and activities that encourage people to enjoy a healthy lifestyle, and we wholeheartedly support the goals for the ‘It’s Not Too Late’ campaign.”

For more information about the diabetes prevention campaign, free materials, tip sheets, and the *GAMEPLAN for Preventing type 2 Diabetes*, which contains tools to help people lose weight, get active, and track their progress, visit the NDEP website at www.ndep.nih.gov or call 1-800-438-5383.

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The National Diabetes Education Program, co-sponsored by the National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, is a leading federal source of information about diabetes control and prevention. The NDEP has more than 200 partner organizations that form a network to reach the health care community and those affected by and at risk for diabetes at the national, state, and local levels.

The YMCA of Florida’s First Coast has 16 facility locations and 65 different program service locations. Collectively, the YMCAs comprise the largest community service organizations in the United States and the largest providers of child care. YMCAs are for men, women and children of all faiths, races, ages, abilities and incomes, and foster core values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. For more information about the YMCA of Florida’s First Coast, visit www.FirstCoastYMCA.org.