



National Institute of Diabetes and  
Digestive and Kidney Diseases  
<http://www.niddk.nih.gov>



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### **World Diabetes Day Focuses on Preventing Diabetic Kidney Disease**

*The National Kidney Disease Education Program and the American Diabetes Association Join  
the International Diabetes Federation in Celebrating World Diabetes Day –  
November 14, 2003*

BETHESDA, MD -- The American Diabetes Association (ADA) and the National Kidney Disease Education Program (NKDEP) applaud the International Diabetes Federation and the World Health Organization as they draw attention to the connection between diabetes and kidney disease through this year's World Diabetes Day theme, "**Diabetes Could Cost You Your Kidneys: Act Now!**"

Studies have clearly and dramatically shown that early diagnosis and careful control of both blood glucose (sugar) and blood pressure and taking an angiotensin converting enzyme (ACE)-inhibitor or angiotensin receptor blocker (ARB) are among the most important available measures to delay or prevent kidney disease and kidney failure among people who have diabetes. And yet, many people are still unaware of the connection between the diseases and that appropriate diabetes management and annual screening for kidney disease are key to preventing kidney failure.

Kidney disease and diabetes are serious problems that spare no country and no racial, ethnic or age group. More than 194 million people now live with diabetes worldwide, and by 2025 more than 333 million will have the disease if steps are not taken to prevent it, according to the International Diabetes Foundation. In the United States, 18.2 million people have diabetes;

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## World Diabetes Day/Page 2

5.2 million don't know they have it. More than 1 million more are diagnosed every year. Ten million Americans have kidney disease, when kidney failure and the need for dialysis or a kidney transplant may be preventable, and nearly 486,000 people are already living with kidney failure--about 96,000 of them newly diagnosed and treated. More than 130,000 have kidney failure due to diabetes. Among the hardest hit are African Americans, who account for more than 30 percent of the 250,000 people treated for kidney failure due to diabetes and high blood pressure.

In addition to the human toll, the cost of medical care and lost productivity due to diabetes is an estimated \$132 billion a year, double the cost of caring for people who don't have the disease. Quality of life for patients and their families could be improved and expenses could be reduced if people had better access to preventive care, were diagnosed earlier and had more intensive care for diabetes and its complications.

People usually have no symptoms of kidney disease until almost all kidney function is gone. The first sign is often fluid buildup in the feet and ankles. ADA and NKDEP encourage people who have diabetes to have an annual test for kidney disease. Don't wait for symptoms. Anyone who has high blood pressure or a family member with kidney failure should talk to a doctor about being tested for kidney disease.

The American Diabetes Association is the nation's leading voluntary health organization supporting diabetes research, information, and advocacy. Founded in 1940, the Association has offices in every region of the country and provides services to hundreds of communities. For more information, visit the Association's Web site at [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org) or call 1-800-DIABETES (1-800-342-2383).

The National Kidney Disease Education Program is an initiative of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, part of the National Institutes of Health under the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. NKDEP is dedicated to raising awareness about the seriousness of kidney disease and steps that can protect the kidneys and prevent kidney failure. To learn more about the program, visit [www.nkdep.nih.gov](http://www.nkdep.nih.gov) or call 1-800-891-5390.

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