



WE CAN BE STRONGER THAN DIABETES

Year of the Child

[Announcer] This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC – safer, healthier people.

Matthew Reynolds: Hi, I'm Matthew Reynolds. November 14, 2007 is World Diabetes Day. This year the theme is *Year of the Child*. With me today to discuss diabetes is Dr. Ann Albright, Director of CDC's Division of Diabetes Translation.

Matthew Reynolds: Welcome to the show, Dr. Albright.

Ann Albright: Thank you very much. It's a pleasure to be here.

Matthew Reynolds: Along with HIV/AIDS, diabetes is the only other disease to have a day observed by the United Nations. How does diabetes affect people on a global scale and what are the implications for U.S. citizens?

Ann Albright: Diabetes is indeed a worldwide problem. It is considered to be at epidemic proportions. Today, worldwide, there are over 240 million people with diabetes and, as we project into the future, that number's expected to go up to 380 million in the not too distant future. Certainly, countries like China and India, due to their significant populations, are at some of the highest risk countries. The United States is also right up there. Today, we have over 21 million people with diabetes and, as we project into the future, that's expected to double over the next couple of decades.

Matthew Reynolds: This year the theme of World Diabetes Day is *Year of the Child*. Why is it important to focus on diabetes and children?

Ann Albright: It's important to focus on diabetes and children because children are being impacted by both of the major forms of diabetes—both type 1 diabetes and type 2. Type 2 used to be thought of as an adult disease. It's now hitting our children, particularly American Indian children. So, they are our next generation, as well; we really do need to focus on the youth of today.

Matthew Reynolds: Are there materials available to help children and their families manage and control diabetes?

Ann Albright: There are some excellent materials available for helping children and their families manage diabetes. The National Diabetes Education Program, the NDEP, has taken an inter-generational approach to managing and preventing diabetes. So, we really are trying to work with grandparents, parents, and children. Some of the materials that NDEP has are very fun. One: Step-by-Step and Movimiento are music CD's which

makes it fun to really work on managing diabetes together, through dance. They also have a *4 Steps to Control Your Diabetes* brochure, and that's really written for people with newly diagnosed diabetes, as well as those that have been living with it for years. It really gives you four steps to help you understand, monitor, and manage your diabetes. And then we also have *Tips for Kids* with type 2 diabetes. It is a series, and it's in English and Spanish. And it's a great popular series of colorful, easy-to-read materials. And finally, a wonderful new series of children's books that are out called the Eagle books. While they are directed toward children of American Indian decent, children of all backgrounds enjoy these books. It's using very colorful characters to talk about diabetes and how to prevent and manage diabetes and to stay healthy.

Matthew Reynolds: You mentioned NDEP. Is there a web site that people can visit for that information specifically?

Ann Albright: There sure is, the web site is www.ndep.nih.gov.

Matthew Reynolds: How are organizations at the regional, state, or local level helping celebrate World Diabetes Day?

Ann Albright: This is one of the exciting things about World Diabetes Day—is that people from all over the world are coming together to really shine a light on the problem of diabetes. There are a number of things going on, both in the United States and around the world. Probably one of the most visible we hope is that the theme around World Diabetes Day is a blue circular pin that symbolizes uniting for diabetes. And so buildings all over the world, the Empire State Building, the Opera Center in Australia, and many others, are going to be lit up with those blue lights on World Diabetes Day to really draw attention to this problem. And then, of course, people are doing various kinds of programs locally, at the state and nationally. Some states and some local communities are having resolutions signed by mayors and signed by governors. Certain things will certainly be going on in New York City, one of the major places where activities for World Diabetes Day will be occurring. There will be a diabetes rally, a multi-educational and motivational experience with speakers, and as I mentioned earlier, the Empire State Building will be lit up and so there'll be a lot of activities around that lighting of the Empire State Building.

Matthew Reynolds: You've mentioned some staggering numbers in terms of the worldwide effect of diabetes. For people that are listening to that and they're wondering, "If I have diabetes, what can I do to control it," or "If I want to avoid diabetes what should I do to prevent it?" What would you say to them?

Ann Albright: This is a critical aspect of diabetes is doing both of those. It is indeed critical that we prevent new cases of preventable diabetes, type 2 diabetes, and improve the outcomes for those that have the disease. In the area of prevention, primary prevention of type 2 diabetes, the best thing you can do for yourself is to really learn your risks for diabetes and also become physically active and take a look at your food intake. We have great science that tells us that if you can lose about 5 to 7 percent

of your body weight, if you're carrying some extra weight, that that will go a long way in preventing the likelihood of you developing type 2 diabetes. If you already have diabetes, no matter what form of the disease, it's very important that you take a look at your nutrition and physical activity, as well. And if you're on medication, to be sure to take that as prescribed.

Matthew Reynolds: Diabetes prevalence has doubled over the past 15 years. Looking ahead, how does CDC plan to address diabetes in the future?

Ann Albright: It is critical that we do address diabetes very well as we move forward because of the tremendous growth in the problem. We've got to be very targeted with our efforts and very clear about what we're doing. We're in the process of the Division of Diabetes Translation at CDC organizing a strategic plan to look and build upon much of the great work that has gone on in the division in the past. We've got very good evidence around how to modify the healthcare delivery system so that people with diabetes are able to really get better care while they're in the healthcare system. And this involves things like really approaching patients around what they're interested in doing about their diabetes—the use of healthcare workers like nurses and dieticians and pharmacists on a broader scale. So it's really some of the efforts that we'll be looking at is around the healthcare delivery system. It's critical because currently, it's not set up terribly well to address chronic diseases. Certainly, that is a role that public health can and should play is to interact with our colleagues in healthcare. It's not our full focus, of course, because we're also very interested in some of the things going on out in communities. So, some of our other work will be focusing on how to link communities with the healthcare system. Most people spend the majority of their time out in their communities and in their places of worship where they participate in civic or community activities. So it's going to be important for us to also be looking at how to better connect what goes on out in those community settings with raising awareness about diabetes, with making people more aware of where they can be physically active, where they can go for better food and nutrition choices. So, along that broad theme, we will be looking at this inter-connection between good care within the healthcare setting and strengthening the community to be able to better adapt and adjust to creating an environment where making the healthy choice is not the difficult choice.

Matthew Reynolds: What is CDC doing that will help advance our knowledge of diabetes and our ability to help treat those with diabetes?

Ann Albright: CDC is very actively engaged in trying to increase the knowledge base and the awareness around diabetes. Not only do we have very strong science base within our division and throughout CDC, we also have got strong programmatic activities. We fund every state and every U.S. territory through the state health departments to be engaged in coordinating and organizing diabetes activities around the nation and in the territories. As mentioned earlier, we have the National Diabetes Education Program. We also have a Native wellness program. So we've got some very strong science base and we will continue to press ahead— working with other partners to broaden that science base to get some of the many unanswered questions we still

are facing in diabetes answered, and then translate that science into practice. That's a key mantra for us here at CDC, is we really are trying very hard to take that science and make it real, get it into people's hands so that they can benefit from the advances that we are making in science. So we will continue to press forward in that area, and we will also, again, work very hard to work with partners who are trying to do some very important things, as well. It's going to be critical for us to be integrating and joining forces with others, because diabetes cannot be fought by a single organization or a single group. It's going to be very very important that we learn and do very well in coordinating and convening and and really networking with others to be able to get a big enough magnitude of impact to really be able to battle this very serious and growing epidemic.

Matthew Reynolds: Dr. Albright, thank you so much for sharing this information with our listeners.

Ann Albright: It's a pleasure. This is such critical information. Diabetes is such a serious and growing disease that we really appreciate the opportunity to get the word out.

Matthew Reynolds: And I would like to remind our listeners, for more information they should visit www.ndep.nih.gov.

[Announcer] To access the most accurate and relevant health information that affects you, your family and your community, please visit www.cdc.gov.