



Health Awareness

New, Free Information For Older Adults With Diabetes

(NAPS)—If you are one of the more than 10 million adults age 60 and older with diabetes in the United States or know an older adult with diabetes, the power to control diabetes is in your hands! A newly updated campaign—sponsored by the National Diabetes Education Program (NDEP), a joint Federal program of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—aims to educate older adults on the importance of controlling their diabetes. *The Power to Control Diabetes Is in Your Hands* campaign also provides important information about the Medicare benefits that help pay for diabetes equipment, supplies, and prescriptions.

Keeping your diabetes under control means following a healthy eating plan, getting regular physical activity, and taking prescribed medication to keep blood glucose (blood sugar) close to normal levels. The campaign includes a consumer brochure that outlines tips for managing diabetes.

For example, use the “ABCs” to control your diabetes, feel better, and stay healthy.

- **A** is for the A1C test. This simple lab test reflects your average blood glucose level over the past 3 months. This is the best way to know how well your blood glucose is controlled overall. The A1C goal for most people with diabetes is below 7.

- **B** is for blood pressure. High blood pressure makes your heart work too hard. It can cause a heart attack, stroke, or kidney disease. Most people with diabetes need to keep their blood pressure



MEDICARE HELPS pay for a number of benefits for people with diabetes.

below 130/80.

- **C** is for cholesterol. Bad cholesterol, or LDL, can build up and clog your blood vessels. It can cause a heart attack or stroke. Most people with diabetes need to keep their LDL cholesterol below 100.

“Through the *Power to Control* campaign, we can effectively teach older adults with diabetes that the complications from this disease can be prevented or delayed,” said Griffin Rodgers, M.D., Deputy Director of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) at NIH. “We can also inform older adults how to access the Medicare benefits that can assist them in controlling their diabetes and, ultimately, improving the quality of their lives.”

The Power to Control campaign materials include a Community Outreach Kit, which is a comprehensive resource designed to assist community organizations in helping their older adults with diabetes learn how to manage the disease. This kit includes diabetes

information; resource lists; ideas to promote diabetes awareness, education, and control; and marketing materials to promote the campaign.

In addition, the Community Outreach Kit includes the clear and comprehensive *Power to Control* brochure about diabetes and related Medicare benefits. Available in both English and Spanish, this brochure also can be used independently for older adults and their loved ones. As described in the brochure, Medicare helps pay for the following benefits for people with diabetes:

- Self-testing equipment and supplies, including blood glucose meters, test strips, and lancets
- Diabetes self-management training with a diabetes educator so you can learn how to control your diabetes

- Nutrition therapy with a registered dietitian or nutrition professional so you can learn which foods are best to eat and how much food is right for you

- Additional services such as foot care and glaucoma

screening. Beginning January 1, 2006, Medicare helps pay for prescription drugs including certain diabetes medications. Enrollment in the drug plan began November 15, 2005. Remember: the power to control diabetes is in your hands!

To learn more about diabetes, visit the NDEP Web site at <http://www.ndep.nih.gov> or call 1-800-438-5383. For more information about Medicare benefits, visit <http://www.medicare.gov> or call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227).

Did You Know?

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