

A publication of the
Pinellas County Health Department

November is Lung Cancer and COPD Awareness Month

Are You At Risk for Developing Lung Cancer?

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death. More people die of lung cancer than of colon, breast, and prostate cancers combined.

According to the American Cancer Society, "87% of lung cancer deaths are caused by smoking." **Quitting smoking now greatly reduces the risk of lung cancer.**

In addition to smoking, there are other **risk factors** that increase a person's chance of getting lung cancer.

◆ **Occupational exposure** to asbestos, radon, coal products, and other industrial/chemical products also increase risk for lung cancer.

◆ **Other diseases** such as tuberculosis (TB) and some types of pneumonia often leave scars on the lung that can increase the risk of developing lung cancer.

◆ **Air pollution** in some cities may slightly increase the risk of lung cancer, but the risk is far less than the risk caused by smoking.

◆ **Family history** of lung cancer may slightly increase risk.

◆ **Diet** low in fruits and vegetables might increase the risk of lung cancer in people who are exposed to tobacco smoke.

Prevention

Some people who get cancer do not have any risk factors, so it is not possible to prevent all cases of lung cancer. The best way to prevent lung cancer is not to smoke and to avoid people who do. If you already smoke, **now is the time to quit.**

Understanding COPD...

COPD is a common lung disease that obstructs the airways making breathing difficult. COPD stands for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease.

Chronic means it won't go away.

Obstructive means partly blocked.

Pulmonary means in the lungs.

Disease means sickness.

People with COPD include those with chronic bronchitis and emphysema.

What are the symptoms of COPD?

Often, the earliest symptom of COPD is a cough that won't go away accompanied by sputum (phlegm) production. The most

common symptom of COPD is shortness of breath on exertion such as when walking quickly or climbing stairs. The shortness of breath gets worse as the disease develops, and many people with COPD have trouble even walking a short distance.

What causes COPD?

The most important cause of COPD is smoking. "Secondhand smoke" also can cause COPD. Dust and chemicals on the job can cause COPD when the exposure is intense or prolonged.

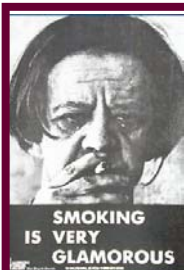
How do I know if I have COPD?

If you have symptoms of COPD as described above and a history of exposure to the risk factors that cause the disease, talk to your doctor or health care provider about COPD. The earlier the disease is found, the better the results of treatment.

How is COPD treated?

COPD can't be cured, but there are treatments that can help patients feel better. Treatment includes pulmonary rehabilitation programs, oxygen therapy, bronchodilators to control symptoms, flu shots to help prevent infection, and using inhaled steroids to reduce inflammation in the lungs.

For more information about COPD, talk to your doctor or healthcare provider or visit www.uscopd.com.



Be a Quitter! Join the **GREAT AMERICAN SMOKEOUT** on Thursday, November 18th. For more Information: 1-877-U-CAN-NOW, www.cancer.org or www.pinellaswellness.com

Our Vision
*Healthier
People in a
Healthier
Environment*

PINELLAS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Take STEPS to Prevent Type 2 Diabetes

November is Diabetes Awareness Month

Do you have diabetes? Could you be at risk for developing the disease?



If you answered “no,” perhaps you should reconsider. The fact is that some 2.7 million - or 11.4 percent - of all African-Americans 20 years old or older

have diabetes - and the frightening part is that at least one-third of them don't know they have it!

Diabetes Mellitus, often called “sugar,” is a serious disease. While it is a leading cause of blindness, it also affects many other organs of the body and can lead to kidney failure, stroke, heart attack, cancer, neuropathy (loss of feeling in the feet and hands), and even amputations.

Type 2 Diabetes is most common and accounts for nearly 95 percent of those who have the disease. Type 2 Diabetes is on the rise in all age groups, but more than 25 percent of African-Americans between the ages of 67 and 74 have diabetes. One out of every four African-American women over the age of 55 has the disease.

While race and ethnicity are considerations in adding up risk factors for diabetes, recent studies have shown that the leading contributor to the development of Type 2 Diabetes is obesity. In Pinellas County, 57 percent of the population is overweight or obese.

“Obesity” is defined as being approximately 30 pounds above your healthy body weight. There is concern that if Americans keep gaining weight at the current rate, almost everyone in the U.S. will be overweight by the year 2030.

As the numbers on the scales climb, so do risk factors for diabetes. You are at even higher risk if you are not physically active, have low levels of HDL, or “good” cholesterol, or have cardiovascular disease and/or high blood pressure.

Symptoms of diabetes may include:

Frequent urination ♦ Tingling or numbness in hands or feet ♦ Excessive thirst ♦ Extreme hunger ♦ Blurred vision ♦ Very dry skin ♦ Slow-healing sores ♦ Frequent infection

If you have diabetes or are experiencing any of the symptoms listed above, act now. The sooner you identify the problem, the sooner you can begin your path to preventing or managing the disease.

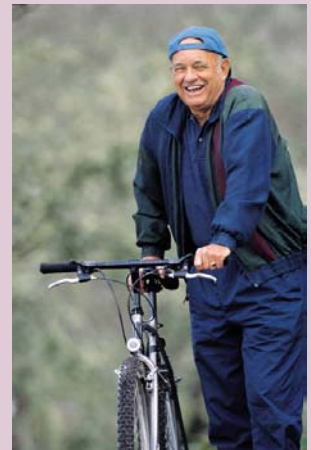
Although diabetes cannot be cured, it can be controlled. You can have a positive influence on your blood glucose (sugar) and your overall health by choosing foods wisely, exercising regularly, reducing your stress level, and making other simple lifestyle changes. When it comes to your health little steps can make a big difference!

Managing diabetes is a team effort that includes your doctor, pharmacist, dietitian, and health educator. However, YOU are the most important part of that team. Ask one of your team members for more information about diabetes and ways to prevent some types of diabetes.

One good source of information is the Diabetes Intervention Prevention Program (DIPP) of **STEPS to a Healthier Pinellas**, a Pinellas County Health Department grant funded by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention. DIPP/STEPS offers free diabetes education and classes to the community in St. Petersburg, Gulfport, Kenneth City, and Pinellas Park.

Through education and other programs, DIPP/STEPS is working to eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities.

STEPS to a Healthier Pinellas can help you on your journey to better health — one STEP at a time. For more information about **STEPS to a Healthier Pinellas**, diabetes, obesity, nutrition, asthma, or tobacco, call (727) 820-4113 or visit www.PinellasWellness.com. You can also learn more about diabetes by visiting www.diabetes.org.



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