

Public Health, Epidemiology and Prevention

PEP Talk

Pinellas County Health Department • March 2007

March 27, 2007 is...

American Diabetes Alert Day

About 1 in 10 adults in Pinellas County have diabetes. In one year, more than 1,000 people in Pinellas County were hospitalized as a result of diabetes – at a cost of \$15.6 million.

What is the American Diabetes Alert?

The American Diabetes Alert is a one-day call-to-action held on the fourth Tuesday of March for people to find out if they are at risk for diabetes.

The Alert's goal is to raise the awareness that diabetes is a serious condition – and you can have diabetes and not even know it.

What is diabetes?

Diabetes means that your blood glucose (sugar) is too high. Your blood always has some glucose in it because the body needs glucose for energy to keep you going. Too much glucose in the blood is not good for your health.

Could you have diabetes?

Diabetes is a silent disease. You could have it for years and never know it. During this time, your eyes, nerves and kidneys may have been harmed by too much sugar in your blood.

Who is at risk for diabetes?

Your risk for diabetes increases as you get older, gain too much weight or if you do not stay active. Diabetes is more common in African Americans, Latinos, Native Americans, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

Risk factors for diabetes include:

- High blood pressure (at or above 130/80)
- Family history of diabetes
- Having diabetes during pregnancy



- Having a baby weighing more than nine pounds at birth.

Don't wait for the signs.

Most people with diabetes do not notice any symptoms. However if you should have any of these symptoms, call your health care provider right away.

- Feeling very thirsty
- Frequent urination
- Losing weight without trying

What can you do?

You can do things now to lower your risk for diabetes by:

- Keeping your weight in control
- Eating low-fat meals that are high in fruits, vegetables and whole grain foods
- Staying active most days of the week.



Learn more. Get involved.

If you or the people you care about are at high risk for diabetes, you should learn more and get involved. Ask your health care provider about your risk for diabetes during your next visit.

Learn more about diabetes.

Share this information with family, friends and neighbors. Help find the 6.2 million Americans with undiagnosed diabetes.

Call 1-800-DIABETES

(1-800-342-2383)

for information about diabetes.

You can also find out about diabetes by calling the Pinellas County Health Department at
(727) 820-4113.



Preventable. Treatable. Beatable!

Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

Colorectal cancer is cancer of the colon and/or rectum. It is the third most common cancer in both men and women, striking them in equal numbers. Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in the U.S.

Colorectal cancer is also one of the most preventable cancers because it can develop from polyps that can be removed before they become cancerous.

PREVENTION

You may be able to prevent colorectal cancer by following these tips:

- Get regular screening tests.
- Exercise regularly and maintain a healthy weight.
- Eat a diet rich in fruits, vegetables and whole grains.
- Don't smoke and don't drink alcohol excessively.

RISK FACTORS

Certain people may be at greater risk of colorectal cancer. Risk groups include:

- Men and women age 50 and older
- People with a personal or family history of colorectal cancer or colorectal polyps
- People with a personal or family history of inflammatory bowel disease, ulcerative colitis or Crohn's disease
- People with a family history of inherited colorectal cancer
- People who use tobacco.
- People who are obese and are sedentary

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

In its early stages, there may not be any symptoms of colorectal cancer. Later, these symptoms may appear:

- Rectal bleeding
- Blood in or on the stool (bright red)
- Change in bowel habits
- Stools that are narrower than usual
- General stomach discomfort (bloating, fullness and/or cramps)



- Diarrhea, constipation or feeling that the bowel does not empty completely
- Frequent gas pains
- Weight loss for no apparent reason
- Constant tiredness
- Vomiting

EARLY DETECTION

Colorectal cancer is easily treated and often curable when detected early. There are many options for screening:

- Have a fecal occult blood test yearly.
- Have a sigmoidoscopy every five years, or a colonoscopy or double contrast barium enema every 5 to 10 years.
- Have all non-cancerous polyps removed to help prevent colorectal cancer before it starts.
- Have a digital rectal exam every 5 to 10 years at the time of each screening sigmoidoscopy, colonoscopy or barium enema.
- If you have a personal or family history of colorectal cancer, benign colorectal polyps, inflammatory bowel disease, or breast, ovarian, or endometrial cancer, talk to your health care provider about earlier screening.

TREATMENT

Surgery is the most common treatment.

Chemotherapy and/or radiation therapy is given before or after surgery to most patients with colorectal cancer that has spread.

There are many treatment options available.

If you are diagnosed with colorectal cancer, please talk with your care team about which is best for you.

To learn more, call 1-877-35-COLON or visit www.preventcancer.org/colorectal

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