National Diabetes Month 2014: Diabetes and Heart Disease

Use these tips to help you promote National Diabetes Month to your local newspapers, radio stations and television stations. For more information, visit YourDiabetesInfo.org/DiabetesMonth2014.

If you have diabetes, it’s important to know your diabetes ABCs. Many people don’t know that having diabetes means that you have a greater chance of having heart problems such as a heart attack or stroke. Taking care of your diabetes can also help you take care of your heart.

**Know your diabetes ABCs:**

**A for the A1C test (A-one-C):**

What is it? The A1C is a blood test that measures your average blood sugar level over the past three months. It is different from the blood sugar checks you do each day. The A1C goal for many people with diabetes is below 7. Ask what your goal should be.

**B for Blood pressure.**

What is it? Blood pressure is the force of your blood against the wall of your blood vessels.

**C for Cholesterol (ko-LESS-tuh-ruhl).**

What is it? There are two kinds of cholesterol in your blood: LDL and HDL. LDL or “bad” cholesterol can build up and clog your blood vessels. It can cause a heart attack or stroke. HDL or “good” cholesterol helps remove the “bad” cholesterol from your blood vessels.

**S is for Stop Smoking.**

Ask for help or call 1-800-QUITNOW

**Ask Your Doctor:**

- What are my blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol numbers?
- What should they be?
- What actions can I take to reach my goals?
You can improve your health, and lower your risk of heart disease or stroke:

- Eat foods like fruits, vegetables, beans, and whole grains.
- Eat foods made with less salt, saturated fat, and trans fat.
- Be active 30 minutes or more each day.
- Stay at or get to a healthy weight by being active and eating the right amounts of healthy foods.
- Stop smoking—ask for help or call 1-800-QUITNOW (1-800-784-8669).
- Take medicines the way your doctor tells you.
- Ask your doctor about taking medicine to protect your heart, such as aspirin or a statin.
- Ask for help if you feel down or have trouble with stress.
- Ask your family and friends to help you take care of your heart and your diabetes.

Note to partners: Here are just a few examples of some NDEP resources that you can highlight with the media to raise awareness about the risks associated with diabetes and heart disease for patients that have been diagnosed with type 2 diabetes. For more information, go to YourDiabetesInfo.org/DiabetesMonth2014.

**Taking Care of Your Diabetes Means Taking Care of Your Heart:** This patient education sheet explains the link between diabetes and heart disease. It encourages patients to work with their health care team to set targets and manage their blood glucose, blood pressure and cholesterol. It also includes a record form to track target numbers. This resource is available in these languages: Cambodian, Chamorro, Chinese, Chuukese, Gujarati, Hindi, Hmong, Japanese, Korean, Laotian, Samoan, Tagalog, Thai, Tongan, and Vietnamese.

**You Are the Heart of Your Family...Take Care of It. (Usted es el corazón de la familia...cuide su corazón) Tip Sheet:** This bilingual (Spanish and English) tip sheet explains the link between diabetes and heart disease for Hispanics/Latinos. It encourages patients to work with their health care team to manage their blood glucose, blood pressure, and cholesterol. A wallet card allows patients to track their target numbers.

**Diabetes and Your Heart Infographic (English and Spanish):** The NDEP’s Diabetes and Your Heart infographic explains the ABCs of diabetes and how diabetes affects the heart. This infographic could be shared with followers on Facebook and Twitter, or embedded in blogs and on websites.

**4 Steps to Manage Your Diabetes for Life:** These four steps help people with diabetes understand, monitor, and manage their diabetes to help them stay healthy. This publication is excellent for people newly diagnosed with diabetes or who just want to learn more about controlling the disease.

**Diabetes HealthSense Resources (English and Spanish):** Diabetes HealthSense offers a range of materials related to heart health, including the American College of Physicians’ Guide to a Healthy Heart for Latinos and the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute’s On the Move to Better Heart Health for African Americans.