

Living Healthy with **DIABETES**

1st Quarter 2006
For BlueCare® and
TennCareSM Select Members

TennCare Tackling Obesity Through Program With Weight Watchers®

Did you know that Tennessee has the fifth highest rate of obesity in the country? Obesity is the condition of being very overweight. It can cause diabetes, heart disease and cancer.

To tackle the problem, TennCare has joined Weight Watchers® to start a new program. The program is called the TennCare Weight Watchers Partnership Program. The main goal is to help people live healthier and lower the cost of health care. The program:

- looks at obesity and health problems caused from being overweight.
- offers weight loss services.
- and promotes healthy living.

Why Weight Watchers®?

A 2003 study found that dieters were more successful in losing and keeping weight off in that program. Weight Watchers® looks at healthy eating, behavior management and physical activity.

As a BlueCare or TennCare **Select** member, you may qualify for the



You may qualify for a new program that offers weight loss services to TennCare members who are very overweight.

program. If you are 10 years of age or older and have a Body Mass Index of more than 30, you may join. Or if you have a doctor's referral, you may join. The program lasts for 12 weeks. To learn more about it, call Weight Watchers®. The phone number is 1-800-651-6000. The call is free. The hours are Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. (CT). Visit the Web site at www.weightwatchers.com to find a place near you.

Check Health Information Library

You can listen to 10 different recorded messages about diabetes. Just call the Health Information Library. The number is 1-800-999-1658. The recorded messages are available 24 hours a day. Press the 1 key on your touch-tone phone, and then follow directions. Codes for diabetes subjects are 4391 through 4400.



CareSmart Offers Support When You Need It Most

As a diabetic, you are prone to other health problems. You can lower your risk of problems by acting now! Our CareSmart Diabetes Disease Management Program can help. The program tells you:

- how to take care of your diabetes.
- helpful tips on eating.
- guidelines for if your blood sugar goes too high or too low.
- phone number for a registered nurse.

The CareSmart program is voluntary. It does not take the place of your doctor's care. The nurse at CareSmart works with your doctor. They will make sure you get the quality care you need. The nurse also:

- works to create a plan of care for you.
- arranges classes in your area, if needed.
- calls you every 1-2 months to talk about your diabetes and answer any questions.

If you are interested in CareSmart, dial 1-800-999-1658. The call is free. The hours are Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. (ET).

Strict Control Key to Diabetes Problems

A new study shows that diabetics who tightly control their blood sugar levels can cut their risk of heart attacks and strokes in half. This is the first proof that the risk of the most serious diabetes problems can be cut. The key is a strict plan of care.

Diabetics' bodies are unable to control the amount of blood sugar. Over time, high sugar levels can hurt the whole body. This opens diabetics to many health problems. Problems include:

- blindness.
- kidney failure.
- harm to nerves that may require cutting off a limb.
- heart attacks and strokes.

A study in 1993 showed that, after about six years, strict care cut the risk for the most common problems. Those problems included eye, kidney and nerve damage. Usual care meant taking a blood sugar test once a day. It also involved one or two insulin shots each day. Strict care included several blood sugar tests each day. It also involved at least three insulin shots or an insulin pump every day.

The study showed that diabetics under strict care were 42 percent less likely to have any kind of heart problem. They were 57 percent less likely to have heart attacks or strokes.

Work harder to manage blood sugar

The findings should push more doctors to tell their patients to use strict care. They should also push more diabetics to work harder at controlling their blood sugar. Many diabetics fail to tightly control their blood sugar.

Nearly 21 million Americans have diabetes. That number is rising as the number of elderly and overweight people grows. Heart disease kills 75 percent of diabetics.

About 5 to 10 percent of diabetics have Type 1 form of the disease. This form usually begins in childhood. It is commonly caused by a breakdown in the body's ability to make insulin. Data show that patients with the more common Type 2 diabetes are likely to have similar benefits from tight blood sugar control. Type 2 is caused when a person's body either cannot make enough insulin or cannot use it well.

Gene Links High-Fat Diet To Diabetes

A new study shows a link between a high-fat diet and diabetes. Scientists have found a gene with an enzyme that helps cells recognize sugar. It also helps cells make insulin. A high-fat diet lowers the ability of the enzyme to work.

One day, scientists might be able to find ways to help prevent diseases linked to too much insulin. Such diseases include cancer and heart disease.

Proper Testing is Key to Controlling Diabetes



Diabetes To-Do List

To manage your diabetes, it is important to include these key points in your care.

☐ *Urine Test for Kidneys*

Taking a urine test is one way to track how well your kidneys are working. The test checks for small amounts of protein in the urine.

☐ *A1C Testing*

The A1C test is a simple test that measures your average blood sugar over three months. This test is the best way for you to know your overall blood sugar control during this period of time. The A1C test is the best way to know how well your care is working over time.

☐ *LDL Cholesterol Testing*

Over time, diabetes can lead to heart and blood vessel disease. This can raise the risk of a heart attack or stroke. Keeping your LDL cholesterol low protects your heart. This test shows your risk of developing heart disease.

☐ *Retinal or Dilated Eye Exam*

Diabetes can cause eye problems. Eye problems can lead to blindness. The best way to prevent eye disease is to have an eye exam. In this exam, the eye doctor puts drops in your eyes to make your pupils get bigger. This is called a dilated (DY-lay-tid) eye exam. When the pupils get big, the doctor can see into the back of the eye.

Check the chart below to find the target levels. Find out how often you should have these tests done.

Know Your Value!

<i>Things to Do</i>	<i>Target Levels*</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Urine test to monitor kidneys	Below 30	At least once a year
A1C test	Below 7%	At least twice a year
LDL cholesterol test	Below 100 mg/dl	At least once a year
Dilated eye exam	Check with your doctor for your target level	At least once a year

*The target levels are for most people with diabetes. If your levels from these tests are not within target, your doctor can help you with changing your care.



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For More Information:

Resources

American Diabetes Association
1-800-342-2383
www.diabetes.org

American Dietetic Association
1-800-366-1655
www.eatright.org

National Diabetes Information
Clearinghouse
1-301-654-3327
www.niddk.nih.gov

American Association of Diabetes
Educators
1-800-TEAM-UP-4
(1-800-832-6874)
www.aadenet.org

No one is treated in a different way because of race, color, birthplace, language, sex, age, or disability. Do you think you've been treated unfairly? Do you have more questions? Do you need more help? You can make a free call to the Family Assistance Service Center at 1-866-311-4287. In Nashville, call 743-2000.

Para información acerca de TennCare en español llame al 1-866-311-4290. For more information about interpretation and translation services, which are free to the enrollee, BlueCare members call 1-800-468-9698. TennCare **Select** members call 1-800-263-5479.

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