



# Living Well Newsletter

A monthly e-publication provided by Esse Health

## ADA Alert Day is March 27

Are you alert to a very important disease?

By: Kathleen Brunts, MD, Esse Health

This disease affects more women than breast cancer. It occurs in men and women, almost equally. It can begin in childhood, adolescence or any age. It affects pregnant women, who must manage it carefully to have a healthy baby. About one out of 3 men and women over age 65 have this disease.

This disease is diabetes. Are you alert to **DIABETES** in your family, workplace and community?

**DIABETES** is a group of diseases characterized by high blood glucose levels that result from defects in the body's ability to produce or use insulin. It is treatable with diet, exercise and medication.

According to the American Diabetes Association, 25.8 million children and adults in the United States have diabetes. Many are not aware they have this important and treatable condition. Prediabetes occurs in another 79 million people, bringing the total to one out of 3 people with diabetes or prediabetes. That's a lot of people who can benefit from partnering with their health care team at Esse Health.

### Are you at risk for diabetes?

The answer is "yes" if any of these apply:

- over age 45,
- family history of diabetes,
- overweight,
- do not exercise regularly,

- have high blood pressure,
- had gestational diabetes or had a baby weighing more than 9 pounds at birth.



If you think you are at risk, discuss this with your team at Esse Health. There are simple blood tests to determine if you have prediabetes or diabetes. You may be due for a test - just ask.

### Steps to Stay Healthy

Everyone should take steps to stay as healthy as possible. You can prevent or delay the onset of diabetes through a healthy lifestyle. Change your diet, increase your level of physical activity and maintain a healthy weight. With these positive steps, you can stay healthier longer and reduce your risk of diabetes.

Here are some examples of exercise: take a brisk walk (outside or inside on a treadmill), go dancing, dance at home, take an exercise class, swim or do water exercises, ice-skate or roller-skate, play a sport, ride a bicycle or stationary bicycle, or play games on a Wii.

How much exercise should you get in a week?

Experts recommend 30 minutes most days of the week. If you can't do this in one block of time, try for 15 minutes twice a day. If you prefer larger amounts of exercise, but can't fit it into your daily schedule,

one hour of exercise, 3 times a week can provide the same health benefits. If you are not exercising at this level, start off slowly and gradually increase until you reach your goal. If you are in good condition, even more exercise will help with weight loss.

### **Esse Health Diabetes Wellness Program**

If you have diabetes, we have a diabetes wellness program at Esse Health to help. The Mission of the Esse Health Diabetes Wellness Program is to partner with those affected by diabetes to achieve the healthiest life possible through education, technology, support and exceptional medical care. Make sure you see your doctor, nurse practitioner or physician assistant at least twice a year, more often if recommended. If you want to eat healthy, you can make an appointment to see one of our registered dietitians, Marjorie Maxwell or Mindy Musselman. You can find out more about our new Better Sugar Control Program by calling the office. To protect your eyesight, see an ophthalmologist or optometrist every year. Just call your Esse Health Office, and we will assist you with any of these.

Did you know we have free group visits for people with diabetes every month? Refreshments are served and your family is welcome to attend with you. Taking Care of Diabetes visits have been shown to improve health. Call Marjorie at 314-368-5058 or Mindy at 314-914-3979 or check our Calendar of Events at [http://www.essehealth.com/wellness\\_calendar.php](http://www.essehealth.com/wellness_calendar.php) for dates and times near you.

Know your numbers. Everyone with diabetes should know their ABC's. A1c, Blood pressure and Cholesterol. Your A1c is a blood test that indicates your average blood sugar control for the previous 3 months. High blood sugars can damage many parts of your body. Blood pressure control is very important. It should be less than 130/80. Too much LDL cholesterol can clog arteries and like high blood pressure, lead to strokes and heart attacks. Find out your numbers and set goals with your health care team. Prevent complications before they happen.

If you have diabetes, prediabetes or are at risk for diabetes, we want you well. Contact your health care team so we can partner with you.



Kathleen Brunts, MD, is a board-certified internal medicine physician at Esse Health's Richmond Heights Internal Medicine Office  
1027 Bellevue, Suite 107  
Richmond Heights, MO 63117

For more information about Esse Health, please visit us online at [www.essehealth.com](http://www.essehealth.com).