

**Revised (Final) 11/13/2006**

### **Questions & Sample Answers**

#### **ECHO-TV Show # 301-302 “Diabetes Prevention and Control”**

(Recording Show: Tuesday, November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2006 / 3:00-8:00 pm-TPT - TV)

#### **1. What is diabetes and why is it important to talk about it in our community?**

Sample Answer:

- Diabetes is a disease that occurs when your body cannot produce or properly use insulin (a natural hormone) to control the amount of glucose (sugar) in your blood.
- The most common types of diabetes are called type 1, type 2 and gestational diabetes which can happen during pregnancy.
- Uncontrolled diabetes may hurt your eyes, kidneys, nerves and heart and even cause death.

#### **2. What causes diabetes?**

Sample Answer:

- The exact causes are not fully understood but you are more likely to get diabetes if:
  - If someone in your family has diabetes;
  - You are African American, American Indian, Hispanic/Latino American, South East Asian American;
  - You are overweight or are over the age of 45;
  - You had diabetes when you were pregnant;
  - You have a history of heart disease, high blood pressure, and/or high cholesterol
- Eating table sugar or candy does not **cause** diabetes however eating too many sweets can cause weight gain which can lead to diabetes.

- Individuals or “New Americans” not used to eating foods high in sugar and carbohydrates may be more at risk of weight gain that can lead to diabetes.

### **3. What is glucose?**

Sample Answer:

- Your body breaks down foods to make glucose or blood sugar that gives your body the energy it needs to live, work and play.
- Your blood always has some glucose in it but too much glucose in your blood is harmful and can lead to diabetes.
- If diabetes is not recognized or treated, the glucose that builds up in the body may cause damage to our heart, kidneys, eyes nerves and other parts of the body.

### **4. How can I tell if I have diabetes (what are the symptoms)?**

Sample Answer:

- Often people aren't aware the early symptoms of diabetes including:
  - Feeling tired (more than usual)
  - Being thirsty (more than usual)
  - Using the bathroom (more than usual)
  - Blurred vision (eyesight)
  - Sores on the body heal slowly (more than usual)
- Advanced symptoms of diabetes can include the feeling of tightness in your chest or pressure on the heart.
- The best way to know if you have diabetes is to have your doctor or health care provider give you a blood glucose test.

## **5. What is a glucose test?**

Sample Answer:

- Your doctor will take a small amount of your blood and measure how much glucose is in your body.
- People with diabetes will often test their own blood to be sure they are controlling their blood glucose (blood sugar) levels with a proper diet, exercise and medications.

## **6. If I have diabetes, how can I take care of it?**

Sample Answer:

- There is no cure for diabetes. Once you have it, you will always have it. People must learn to control their diabetes with help from a doctor or health care provider.
- Some people with diabetes take medicine every day by swallowing a pill or receiving an insulin injection (shot) or both.
- People with diabetes learn how to test their blood sugars visiting the doctor or health care provider who will teach them how to use a blood glucose monitor.
- By developing healthy eating habits and getting regular exercise and sometimes taking medication or insulin shots, diabetes can be controlled.

## **7. What can I do to keep myself and my family from getting diabetes?**

Sample Answer:

- A healthy diet and moderate exercise are the key ingredients to preventing or controlling diabetes. Families play a role in teaching children not to overeat and to eat healthy foods.
- Eating lots of vegetables and fruits. Try picking from the rainbow of colors (red, green, yellow and orange). Eat non-starchy vegetables such as spinach, carrots, broccoli and green beans.
- Be aware of the foods in your culture that are high in sugar or starches and cause weight gain by eating too much such as:
  - SE Asian: Sticky rice; noodles; Kapoor
  - Hispanic: Tortillas; Fried foods
  - Somali: Injera
- Choose breads and pasta made with whole grains. Limit grain products that are high in sugars.
- Low fat meat, chicken, fish and tofu are healthy foods.
- Choose dairy products that are low fat and prepare foods with little or no added fat or salt.

**8. Why is exercise so important for controlling or preventing diabetes? Sample Answer:**

- Regular physical activity (exercise) burns calories and that helps lower your blood glucose and cholesterol that can lead to diabetes.
- Exercise can improve blood pressure and your body's ability to use insulin not to mention exercise helps you lose weight.
- Daily exercise can be as simple as walking more, riding a bike, dancing, stretching, gardening or (*provide cultural specific activity*).

**9. What are some unhealthy eating habits?**

Sample Answer:

- Overeating. Take only enough food to satisfy your hunger rather than overeating (serve yourself small portions instead of eating from the serving bowl)

- Drinking too many sweet beverages made with sugar or corn syrup (check the label for sugar amounts and calories).
- Drinking too many alcoholic beverages (wine, beer or liquors). They can cause weight gain that may increase blood sugars.
- Eating fast food meals. They tend to be high in fat and cause weight gain.
- Eating too many snacks and sweet foods. Limit how much and how often you eat candies or foods made with lots of sugar, fat or salt.

## 10. Is there anything else our expert guest might like to add?

(Optional question only if time permits)

Sample Answer:

- Recreational centers are places where people can exercise with little or no cost year round.
- Community clinics have resources and diabetes educators who can help people learn how to control diabetes.
- Guests may wish to use extra time to elaborate more on any culturally specific diabetes prevention and control suggestions impacting Lao, Vietnamese, Somali, Cambodian, Hmong and Hispanic families....