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**American Diabetes Association, Alexandria, VA**

**1 In 3 Americans Born in 2000 Will Develop Diabetes**

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*Experts Urge Immediate Action to Prevent Type 2 Disease*

New Orleans, LA (June 14, 2003) One in three Americans born in 2000 will develop diabetes, according to a U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report presented here at the American Diabetes Association's 63rd Annual Scientific Sessions.

“The estimated lifetime risk of developing diabetes for persons born in 2000 was 33 percent for males and 39 percent for females, based on data from the National Health Interview Survey, U.S. Census Bureau and other sources,” said K.M. Venkat Narayan, MD, Chief of Diabetes Epidemiology Section, Division of Diabetes Translation, CDC, in a recent interview. The highest estimated lifetime risks were among Hispanics 45 percent for males and 53 percent for females.

“Primary prevention of diabetes is thus an important priority for the nation,” emphasized Dr. Narayan, “because diabetes is one of the most prevalent and costly chronic diseases in the United States.”

“Prevention is imperative,” said James R. Gavin III, MD, PhD, chair of the National Diabetes Education Program, which is jointly sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) National Institutes of Health (NIH) and CDC. “The health care delivery system must dramatically scale up preventive efforts to stem the rising tide of type 2 diabetes.” Gavin went on to describe an effort of the National Diabetes Education Program (NDEP) to help prevent type 2 diabetes. The campaign, “Small Steps, Big Rewards. Prevent type 2 Diabetes,” emphasizes that modest lifestyle changes -- including healthier diets and physical activity -- can help people prevent the onset of type 2 diabetes, the most common form of the disease.

More than 17 million Americans have diabetes, a group of serious diseases characterized by high blood sugar levels that result from defects in the body's ability to produce and/or use insulin. Diabetes can lead to severely debilitating or fatal complications, such as heart disease, blindness, kidney disease and amputations. Diabetes is the fifth-leading cause of death by disease in the U.S.

Nationally, diabetes has increased nearly 50 percent in the past 10 years alone, according to CDC estimates, and the incidence of the disease is expected to grow another 165 percent by 2050 under current trends.

“The Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) and other international clinical trials have shown that type 2 diabetes can be prevented or delayed through modest changes in lifestyle,” said Dr. Gavin. In the DPP, people with pre-diabetes -- those whose blood glucose levels are higher than normal but not high enough for a diagnosis of diabetes -- were able to cut their risk of developing type 2 diabetes by more than half by losing 5 to 7 percent of their body weight through moderate changes, including a lower fat diet and increased exercise, such as a 30-minute brisk walk five times per week. These lifestyle changes worked for people of every ethnic or racial group who participated in the study, and they were especially successful for people over age 65.

Risk factors for diabetes and pre-diabetes include being overweight, inactive, age 45 or older, having high blood pressure, low HDL cholesterol and high triglycerides, a family history of diabetes, a history of gestational diabetes or giving birth to a baby weighing more than 9 pounds, and belonging to an ethnic or minority group at high risk for diabetes. African Americans, Hispanic Americans/Latinos, American Indians and Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders are at increased risk for type 2 diabetes.

The American Diabetes Association is the nation's leading voluntary health organization supporting diabetes research, information and advocacy. Founded in 1940, the Association has offices in every region of the country, providing services to more than hundreds of communities.

NDEP involves more than 200 public and private sector partners who work at the national, state and local level, including the American Diabetes Association. More information on the new NDEP campaign, "Small Steps, Big Rewards. Prevent type 2 Diabetes" and on the diagnosis and treatment of diabetes and pre-diabetes is available at [www.ndep.nih.gov](http://www.ndep.nih.gov) or by calling 1-800-438-5383.