

Undiagnosed diabetes takes economic toll

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Approximately 6.3 million adults—or one fourth of the people in the U.S. with diabetes mellitus—are unaware they have the disease, and this undiagnosed population accounts for an estimated \$18 billion in health care costs each year, according to a study in a recent issue of *Population Health Management*, a peer-reviewed journal published by Mary Ann Liebert.

Yiduo Zhang, PhD, from the Lewin Group (Falls Church, VA), and colleagues from Ingenix Pharmainformatics (Cary, NC), and Ingenix Research (Basking Ridge, NJ), studied the [health care](#) use patterns of a group of people for the 2-year period leading up to a diagnosis of diabetes. They used these findings as the basis for economic estimates they present in the report, "The [Economic Costs](#) of Undiagnosed Diabetes."

Diabetes costs the U.S. economy about \$174 billion in 2007 in medical expenses and lost productivity, but that figure does not take into account the national economic costs associated with undiagnosed diabetes, which could raise the estimate to more than \$192 billion. Yearly health care needs for individuals with undiagnosed diabetes tend to be higher than for persons who do not have diabetes. The [health care costs](#) associated with diabetes begin to increase at least 8 years before diagnosis and grow at a faster rate shortly before and after diagnosis.

"[Diabetes](#) is one of the most devastating chronic diseases and costs the nation billions of dollars. Building an evidence base as to what works and what doesn't is going to be critical," says Journal Editor-in-Chief David

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More information: The article is available free online at
www.liebertpub.com/pop

Source: Mary Ann Liebert, Inc.

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