

Diabetes or its precursor affects 100 million Americans

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Almost one-third of the US population—100 million people—either has diabetes or its precursor condition, known as pre-diabetes, said a government report Tuesday.

Diabetes is a serious disease that doubles the risk of [early death](#). Complications can include blindness, [heart disease](#), stroke, [kidney failure](#) and amputation of fingers, toes and limbs.

In the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Diabetes Statistics Report, released about every two years, the agency described diabetes as a "growing health problem" that was the seventh leading cause of death in the US in 2015.

That year alone, an estimated 1.5 million new cases of diabetes were diagnosed among people ages 18 and older, it said.

"Consistent with previous trends, our research shows that diabetes cases are still increasing, although not as quickly as in previous years," said Ann Albright, director of the CDC's Division of Diabetes Translation.

A total of 30.3 million people in the United States have diabetes, accounting for 9.4 percent of the population.

Another 84.1 million—about one in three people—have prediabetes, a condition that if not treated often leads to type 2 diabetes within five years.

People with prediabetes have higher than [normal blood sugar](#), but not quite to the threshold of being type 2 diabetes.

However, doctors say that damage to the heart, blood vessels and kidneys may already be starting.

Another troubling statistic unearthed by the report showed many people are unaware of their condition.

"Nearly one in four adults living with diabetes—7.2 million Americans—didn't know they had the condition," it said.

A full 88 percent of adults with prediabetes did not know they had it.

The most common form of diabetes, known as Type 2, can often be managed through exercise, diet, and the appropriate use of insulin and other medications to control [blood sugar](#).

Type 1 diabetes arises when the body simply doesn't make enough insulin, and there is no known way to prevent it.

"Although these findings reveal some progress in [diabetes management](#) and prevention, there are still too many Americans with diabetes and prediabetes," said CDC Director Brenda Fitzgerald.

"Now, more than ever, we must step up our efforts to reduce the burden of this serious disease."

The report found that 25 percent of people aged 65 and older had diabetes, making seniors by far the most affected age group.

Diagnoses of diabetes were highest among American Indians/Alaska Natives (15.1 percent), African-Americans (12.7 percent), and Hispanics (12.1 percent).

The rate among Asians was eight percent, and non-Hispanic whites was 7.4 percent.

Geographically, the highest rates of [diabetes](#) were found in the American south and Appalachian areas.

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