

The High Price of Diabetes

There is little question that diabetes is a serious problem in the elderly, that it contributes to comorbidities such as heart and kidney disease, and that diabetic complications are a common cause for nursing facility admissions. However, when one looks at the statistics regarding the impact of diabetes on the elderly and others and the financial burden the disease causes, the tremendous need for early recognition and aggressive treatment takes on a new urgency.

These statistics from the American Diabetes Association demonstrate just how widespread and costly this disease is to its victims and the health care system.

10.3

million people age 60 and older have diabetes. This represents nearly one-fourth of the people in this age group.

(ADA, 2005)

3.2

million non-Hispanic African Americans have diabetes, compared to 13.1 million non-Hispanic whites. However, this accounts for 13% of the African American population versus only 9% of whites.

(ADA, 2005)

4,000

or more people are diagnosed with diabetes every day. One in three Americans born in 2000 will develop diabetes in his or her lifetime.

(ADA, 2005)

\$13,243

was the per capita annual cost of health care for people with diabetes in 2002. This represents a \$3,000 increase from 1997.

(ADA, 2002)

15%

of nursing home services in the U.S. are attributed to diabetes. Diabetes also accounts for 18% of home health visits and 15% of hospice care services.

(ADA, 2005)



186,000

deaths are attributed annually to diabetes. About 19% of all deaths for which cardiovascular disease is listed as the primary cause are attributed to diabetes. This accounts for 108,000 of all deaths due to diabetes.

(ADA, 2002)

1,200

To 2,400 new cases of blindness each year are caused by diabetic retinopathy.

(ADA, 2005)

44%

of cases of kidney disease identify diabetes as the leading cause.

(ADA, 2002)

153,730

people with end-stage renal disease due to diabetes are living on dialysis.

(ADA, 2002)

60%

to 70% of people with diabetes have mild to severe forms of nervous system damage. The results of this damage include numbness or impaired sensation in hands or feet, slowed digestion, and carpal tunnel syndrome.

(ADA, 2005)

82,000

Or more nontraumatic lower-limb amputations are performed in people with diabetes every year. The rate of amputation for diabetic patients is 10 times higher than for people without the disease.

(ADA, 2002)