



Diabetes

The facts

- Death rates from diabetes for African-American women in Georgia are three times higher than for white women.
- With its complications, diabetes is the seventh leading cause of death (sixth leading cause of death by disease) in the United States. Complications associated with diabetes include heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, blindness, nerve disease, amputation, high blood pressure, dental disease, complications of pregnancy, and susceptibility to infection.
- About 217,000 adults in Georgia know that they have diabetes. Another 108,000 have diabetes but are not aware that they do.
- Diabetes is nearly twice as common among blacks in Georgia as it is among whites.
- Compared with non-Hispanic whites, diabetes rates are about 60% higher in African Americans and 110%-120% higher in Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans. American Indians have the highest rates of diabetes in the world.
- In 1997, 21% of Georgians who died from diabetes were less than 60 years of age.

Types of diabetes

- **Type 1 (insulin-dependent) diabetes** affects 5%-10% of those with diabetes and most often occurs during childhood or adolescence. It occurs equally among males and females, but is more common in whites than nonwhites.
- **Type 2 (non-insulin-dependent) diabetes** affects is more prevalent, affecting 90%-95% of those with diabetes. This type is more common in older people, especially older women who are overweight, and occurs more often among African Americans, Hispanics, and American Indians.
- **Gestational diabetes** develops in 2%-5% of all pregnancies, but disappears when pregnancy is over. Women who have had gestational diabetes are at an increased risk for developing Type 2 diabetes later in life.

What are the signs?

- Being very thirsty
- Urinating a lot
- Feeling very hungry or tired
- Losing weight without trying
- Having sores that are slow to heal
- Having dry, itchy skin
- Losing feeling in the feet or having tingling in the feet
- Having blurry eyesight

How can I take care of myself if I have diabetes?

- Eat healthy food.
- Get regular exercise.
- Take your diabetes medicine.
- Test your blood sugar.



Sources:

- ❖ [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) - Wonder/PC Data File, Compressed Mortality. Death Count 15 to unknown age, Females, 1996-1997, By Race-Year, Georgia.
- ❖ [American Diabetes Association](#), "Diabetes Information Section," 2000.
- ❖ Office of Women's Health. [National Women's Health Information Center](#), "Diabetes & African American Women."
- ❖ [Institute of Diabetes & Digestive & Kidney Diseases](#), NIH. National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse, "Diabetes Overview," 1999.
- ❖ Powell, KE; Thomas, SM; Martin, LM; and Fox, PM. *Georgia Diabetes Report*. Georgia Department of Human Resources, Division of Public Health, Cardiovascular Health Section.

This information is being provided as a source of education and information and is not a substitute for medical advice or treatment. The OWH recommends consultation with your doctor or healthcare professional.