

# Harmony Through Health Newsletter

Summer, 2003

## DM Program Update

For those of you who are traveling this summer, don't forget to include the following in your luggage:

- Blood sugar meter (including strips and lancets)
- Diabetes pills
- Diabetes ID bracelet or necklace
- Food for low blood sugar (hard candy, juice, non-diet soda)

### Tips to Remember

- You may need to check your blood sugar more often, especially if you

are walking more than usual.

- Remember to eat small, frequent meals to prevent too high and too low blood sugars levels.
- Pack comfortable walking shoes.

Have fun this summer, by taking care of yourself.

Congratulations to NACA's Registered Dietitian, Cathy Johnson! After much studying and very difficult testing she has become a Certified Diabetic Educator (CDE). Remem-



Drink plenty of water and stay hydrated.

ber, Cathy is always available to assist you in evaluating and improving your nutrition.

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## America's Walk for Diabetes, 2003

### Help find a cure for Diabetes!

No registration fee; walkers are asked to get tax-deductible donations from family, friends, co-workers and neighbors or a make a personal donation. The route is stroller and child friendly. Form a walk team of 5 friends, relatives, co-workers or neighbors. Earn walker thank you gifts. En-

joy food and fun while helping in the fight against diabetes! Sponsorships and sampling/coupon opportunities available.

There is walk Saturday, Sept 20, 2003. Check-in is at 9:00 a.m. at Williams Health Care Center, 301 S. 7th Street, Williams, AZ. The walk starts at 9:30 a.m. Walk distance is 3.0 miles to the Ramada

Inn and back.

In Flagstaff, the walk is scheduled for Saturday, Oct 11, 2003 at NAU.

Register now at [www.diabetes.org/walk](http://www.diabetes.org/walk) or call Rose Marie Rincon at (928) 635-4897 or see Cathy for registration form.

## Triglycerides Emerge From the Shadows

After years of focusing on LDL ("bad") cholesterol as the key blood fat in the development of heart disease, scientists are now taking a second look at triglycerides. Research shows that high triglycerides alone can raise the risk of artery disease.

This discovery has led to tighter guidelines for triglyceride levels and to a new focus on finding ways to bring triglycerides down.

### What are Triglycerides?

Triglycerides are the most common fat in the body. The triglycerides in your blood are the ones that matter to the heart. Some come from the food you eat and others are made by your body.

Triglyceride levels that are too-high are called "hypertriglyceridemia."

New government guidelines set a goal of less than 150 mg/dl after an overnight fast. Levels of triglycerides of 150 to 199 mg/dl are labeled borderline high, and those 200 to 499 mg/dl are high and those 500 mg/dl or higher are considered to be very high.

### Nondrug Treatments

Lifestyle changes are key to treating triglycerides above 150 mg/dl:

- If you are overweight, lose weight
- Cut back on saturated fat (found in meats and high-fat dairy products) and cholesterol.
- Drink less alcohol. Even in small amounts, alcohol can raise triglycerides.
- Engage in physical activity for at least 30

minutes a day on most days of the week.

- Eat healthy fats such as salmon, albacore tuna, mackerel, sardines, and lake trout.

Also, the American Heart Association recommends that people with high triglycerides avoid very low fat diets (less than 15 percent of calories from fat). Although lowering the amount of fat in your diet-especially saturated fat-generally has good effects, very low-fat diets raise triglyceride levels in some people who already have high levels due to a higher intake of carbohydrates.

Diabetic patients should receive cholesterol checks (lipid profile) yearly. Ask your doctor for your test results.



This discovery has led to tighter guidelines for triglyceride levels

## Uncontrolled Diabetes Leads to More Birth Defects

Better get your blood glucose under control before you even think about getting pregnant.

Researchers in Texas studied 145,196 women who delivered babies between January 1, 1991 and December 31, 2000. This was to determine whether the women had diabetes before pregnancy or devel-

oped it during pregnancy, know as gestational diabetes.

Women who had diabetes before they got pregnant or who developed gestational diabetes with elevated fasting blood-glucose levels were three to four times more likely to have babies with birth

defects than women who either did not have diabetes before pregnancy or who developed what researchers termed "mild" gestational diabetes. "Mild" gestational diabetes was defined as diabetes that did not require insulin injections to (continue on page 3) control glucose levels.



Better get your blood glucose under control before you even think about getting pregnant.

## Uncontrolled Diabetes.... (continued from page 2)

The risk of birth defects increases as a women's blood glucose becomes higher.

As the lead researcher

noted, however, previous studies have shown that tight blood-glucose control before and during pregnancy helps to lower the risk of having a baby

with birth defects.

-*Obstetrics & Gynecology*,  
November 2002

J. Chait



"...tight blood-glucose control before and during pregnancy helps to lower the risk of having a baby with birth defects."

## "Ahh" Shouldn't be the only thing you say to the Docs!

It's almost impossible to take proper care of diabetes in a 7 minute office visit. That's one reason why busy providers sometimes skip things, or change some part of your plan without looking at the WHOLE picture. Protect yourself by speaking up. It's not rude or unfair to expect complete, clear answers to your questions. Remember whose health is at stake!

### Working with your doctor

Check your blood sugar often, even if your doctor says you don't need to.

- The doctor may not need the information but YOU do!
- Control can change through no fault of yours—and you may not feel it.
- If your blood sugars stay out of control, see your doctor right away.

### Know the Standard of Care for Diabetes.

- Make sure all the checks are done on time, even if you feel GREAT.

- Never assume your team is doing everything that's needed. Check!

### Speak up when you have a question or concern.

### Know all the treatment options for your condition. ASK

- What are the benefits, risks and side effects of this?

### Be aware of any changes to your diabetes care, ASK

- Why is a change needed?
- What is this medicine? How is it better? What does it do?
- Why did you stop (change the dose of) my old medicine?
- Think about what you know about all the medicines and insulins.
- If you don't agree with the change, say so.

### If you have a test done

- Call to get the results.

No news is not always good news.

- Get a copy and keep it in your records. Compare it to earlier ones.

### Prescriptions

Keep a list of all medicines

- Prescription, over the counter, herbal products and so on.
- Update it when things change
- Keep a copy with you at all times.

### Review every new prescription before leaving the doctor's office

- Make sure you can read it and understand what it's for.
- Ask when and how to take it and what side effects, if any to expect.

From Diabetes Management & Training Centers, Inc. 2002



Check your blood sugar often, even if your doctor says you don't need to.

NACA FAMILY  
HEALTH CENTER

1500 E. Cedar Ave.  
Suite 26  
Flagstaff, AZ 86004  
Phone: 928-773-1245  
Fax: 928-773-9429  
Website: www.nacainc.org

## Burning Extra Calories

**Exercise is essential for avoiding unwanted pounds.**

We all have a lot to get done every day. Still, there are very good reasons to find the time to get your heart rate up. And you don't have to go to a gym or sweat for 30 to 60 uninterrupted minutes a day to enjoy the benefits of physical activity.

Numerous studies have shown that getting regular physical activity can:

- Delay or prevent type 2 diabetes
- Lower triglycerides and increase HDL cho-



Getting some exercise is better than getting none at all. Getting three 10-minute sessions of exercise a day can be just as effective in improving your heart health as one 30-minute session.

- lesterol
- Improve glucose tolerance
- Help people lose weight and maintain weight loss
- Lower blood pressure
- Improve one's mood and self-esteem.
- Improves sleep
- Provides more energy

-Diabetes Forecast, April 2003

-Heather Raglin Quartetti

