

## How Healthcare Professionals Can Take Action Against Diabetes

**By Marcelle Thurston MS RD CDE**  
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A recent Washington State Department of Health study found that about one in three Washington adults ages 25 or older had fasting blood glucose levels indicating pre-diabetes. Pre-diabetes means that your blood sugar level is higher than normal. People with pre-diabetes have an increased risk of developing costly chronic diseases such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and stroke. We know that if we diagnose people with pre-diabetes early, help them increase physical activity and reduce body weight, we can prevent about half of the people with pre-diabetes from progressing to type 2 diabetes. Pre-diabetes is preventable and reversible.

Health care professionals can prevent type 2 diabetes by screening those at risk early. According to the 2010 American Diabetes Association (ADA) Clinical Practice Recommendations, to identify people with pre-diabetes, testing should be considered in all adults who are overweight (BMI  $\geq$  25) and have one or more *additional risk factors*:<sup>1</sup>

- Physical inactivity

- 45 years or older
- First-degree relative with diabetes
- Members of high-risk populations including, African American, Latino, Native American, Asian American, and Pacific Islander
- Women who delivered a baby weighing more than nine pounds or who were diagnosed with gestational diabetes
- Hypertension ( $\geq$  140/90 mmHg or on medication)
- HDL cholesterol level less than 35 mg/dl and/or triglyceride level greater than 250 mg/dl
- Women with polycystic ovary syndrome
- History of cardiovascular disease

In addition, the ADA Clinical Practice Recommendations list the diagnostic criteria for pre-diabetes as one of the following:

- Impaired Fasting Glucose (IFG): 100 mg/dl -125 mg/dl
- Impaired Glucose Tolerance (IGT): Post-load glucose 140 mg/dl -199 mg/dl
- Hemoglobin A1C: 5.7% -6.4%

In 2002, the U.S. Diabetes Pre-

vention Program confirmed that an intensive lifestyle intervention combining dietary modification and regular physical activity could reduce the development of diabetes by more than half among adults with pre-diabetes. Three and ten-year follow-up studies have shown that participants continue to delay diabetes onset.

Over the past seven years, Indiana University School of Medicine conducted a series of research studies to design a more cost effective, group based, community model. By partnering with YMCA's in Indianapolis, they were able to replicate the same weight loss (5%-7% body weight) as the intensive model at a fraction of the cost. Modest weight loss is important to delaying or preventing type 2 diabetes

The Centers for Disease Prevention and Control (CDC), Y-USA and UnitedHealth Group have recently partnered to formally disseminate the community based model across the nation. Currently, several YMCA's in Washington offer the 16 week YMCA Diabetes Prevention Program for people with pre-diabetes.

### How you can take action:

- Identify patients at risk and screen for pre-diabetes

- Refer patients diagnosed with pre-diabetes to a Diabetes Prevention Program. See list of locations below.

*Marcelle Thurston MS, RD, CDE is the manager for the Diabetes Prevention and Control Program (DPCP) for the Washington State Department of Health. Marcelle previously coordinated policy and environmental activities within the healthcare sector for the Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity Pre-*

*vention Program. She brings a decade of experience as a Certified Diabetes Educator, a Registered Dietitian and a private nutrition consultant. This experience allows her to serve as the designated department expert to inform and educate state policy makers, agency administrators and the public about the importance of prevention, diagnosis and management of diabetes and pre-diabetes.*

*Marcelle is the liaison between*

*DPCP and other Department of Health programs to promote integration of activities that address shared risk factors for chronic disease. Marcelle is a member of the Washington Association of Diabetes Educators (WADE) and American Association of Diabetes Educators (AADE).*

<sup>1</sup>ADA. Standards of Medical Care in Diabetes -2010. Diabetes Care, January 2010;33(Suppl. 1): S13 (Table 4).

### Washington State Diabetes Prevention Program Locations

<b>Seattle YMCA</b> (4 locations) Lindsey Gregerson (206) 344-3181 lgregerson@seattleyymca.org www.seattleyymca.org	<b>Gig Harbor YMCA</b> Susan Buell 10550 Harbor Hill Drive Gig Harbor, WA 98332 (253) 853-9622 www.ymcatacoma.org	<b>Wenatchee Valley YMCA</b> Hillary Conner 217 Orondo Wenatchee, WA 98801 (509) 662-2109 www.wenymca.org	<b>YMCA of the Inland NW</b> Keats McGonigal 930 N. Monroe Spokane, WA 99201 (509) 777-YMCA (9622) www.ymcaspokane.org
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