

# Fighting Diabetes Successfully Requires a Family Effort

Family dinners, movie nights, road trips to visit relatives -- these are all important family traditions. But, there is a new tradition that every family should make their own -- checking their health.

More than 17 million people living in the United States have diabetes. And according to a new U.S. government report, 33 percent of boys and 39 percent of girls born in 2000 will develop diabetes in their lifetime. The report states that minority children face an even greater risk of developing the disease.

With these staggering numbers, it's more important than ever for families to take a look at ways to prevent this devastating disease. Research studies show that lifestyle changes can prevent the onset of type 2 diabetes among high-risk adults; therefore, making changes in your family's eating habits and creating a family exercise plan are two steps that can put your loved ones on the right path. It can be as simple as taking a walk after dinner or taking a family bike ride on the weekends and limiting the amount of sugar in your diets. Since diabetes is hereditary, checking the medical histories of extended family members is also an important step in combating this epidemic.

In honor of National Diabetes Awareness, APMA is offering a special section on its Web site designed specifically to educate children about the disease. An interactive cartoon teaches the importance of early prevention and allows for a friendly, nonthreatening environment, where children can learn and educate their friends and family members. After all, battling this disease is truly a family affair.

Education and awareness are helpful allies in the prevention of diabetes. Several Web sites provide information at your fingertips. The American Podiatric Medical Association's Web site, [www.apma.org](http://www.apma.org), provides essential information on diabetes, as well as helpful tips on foot care. Free literature on foot care can also be obtained by contacting the APMA at 1-800-FOOTCARE.



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9312 Old Georgetown Road  
Bethesda, MD 20814-1621  
(301) 581-9200