The Burden of Diabetes in Nebraska

Diabetes is an epidemic in the United States. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), over 37 million Americans have diabetes and face its devastating consequences. What’s true nationwide is also true in Nebraska.

Nebraska’s diabetes epidemic:

- Approximately 141,491 people in Nebraska, or 9.6% of the adult population, have diagnosed diabetes.
- An additional 44,000 people in Nebraska have diabetes but don’t know it, greatly increasing their health risk.
- There are 522,000 people in Nebraska, 36.2% of the adult population, who have prediabetes with blood glucose levels that are higher than normal but not yet high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes.
- Every year an estimated 13,534 people in Nebraska are diagnosed with diabetes.

Diabetes is expensive:

People with diabetes have medical expenses approximately 2.3 times higher than those who do not have diabetes.

- Total direct medical expenses for diagnosed diabetes in Nebraska were estimated at $993 million in 2017.
- In addition, another $384 million was spent on indirect costs from lost productivity due to diabetes.

Improving lives, preventing diabetes and finding a cure:

In 2021, the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases at the National Institutes of Health invested $3,790,831 in diabetes-related research projects in Nebraska. The Division of Diabetes Translation at the CDC provided $1,876,165 in diabetes prevention and educational grants in Nebraska in 2018.

Sources include:

- Diabetes Incidence: 2018 diabetes incidence rate, cdc.gov/diabetes/data
- Research expenditures: 2021 NIDDK funding, report.nih.gov/award/index.cfm; 2020 CDC diabetes funding, fundingprofiles.cdc.gov/FundingProfiles/FundingQuery

Diagnosed diabetes costs an estimated $1.4 billion in Nebraska each year.

The serious complications include heart disease, stroke, amputation, end-stage kidney disease, blindness—and death.