The Burden of Diabetes in Tennessee

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 Tennessee.

Tennessee’s diabetes epidemic:

- Approximately 730,416 people in Tennessee, or 13.6% of the adult population, have diagnosed diabetes.
- An additional 158,000 people in Tennessee have diabetes but don’t know it, greatly increasing their health risk.
- There are 1,792,000 people in Tennessee, 34.3% 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 47,685 people in Tennessee 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 Tennessee were estimated at $5.2 billion in 2017.
- In addition, another $2.1 billion 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 $54,371,736 in diabetes-related research projects in Tennessee. The Division of Diabetes Translation at the CDC provided $1,269,009 in diabetes prevention and educational grants in Tennessee in 2018.

Sources include:

- Diabetes Incidence: 2016 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