The Burden of Diabetes in Kentucky

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 Kentucky.

Kentucky’s diabetes epidemic:
- Approximately 474,456 people in Kentucky, or 13.6% of the adult population, have been diagnosed with diabetes.
- An additional 101,000 people in Kentucky have diabetes but don’t know it, greatly increasing their health risk.
- There are 1,168,000 people in Kentucky, 33.8% 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 26,605 people in Kentucky 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 Kentucky were estimated at $3.6 billion in 2017.
- In addition, another $1.6 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 $10,674,103 in diabetes-related research projects in Kentucky. The Division of Diabetes Translation at the CDC provided $2,084,517 in diabetes prevention and educational grants in Kentucky in 2018.

Sources include:
- Research expenditures: 2021 NIDDK funding, report.nih.gov/award/index.cfm; 2020 CDC diabetes funding, fundingprofiles.cdc.gov/FundingProfiles/FundingQuery