



Department of Health  
Agency of Human Services



## Early Action Can Prevent Diabetes

### Take the Diabetes Risk Test During National Public Health Week April 5-9

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BURLINGTON – Public health officials have seen the prevalence of obesity climb slowly but steadily among middle-aged Vermonters, a time when modest lifestyle changes can prevent chronic diseases such as diabetes.

Early diagnosis is essential to successfully treat – and prevent or delay – diabetes and complications such as heart disease, blindness, kidney disease, stroke and amputation. Overweight or inactive Vermonters are at higher risk for diabetes.

“The high overweight and obesity rates we are seeing among the 30 to 59-year-old age group is troubling,” said Health Commissioner Wendy Davis, MD. “Most people see the risk of diabetes in other people, but not in themselves, and what we need is a ‘wake up’ call among middle-aged Vermonters.”

Vermont has one of the oldest populations in the United States, and age is one of two key contributing factors to diabetes. The second cause is excess body weight. Vermont's overweight population is destined to suffer from diabetes unless we eat healthier and increase physical activity. But drastic changes are not necessary. Even making small changes, such as taking a 30 minute walk each day or riding a bike rather than driving, produces big rewards.

“Middle-aged problems do not have to become problems in old age,” Dr. Davis said. “The first step is to find out if you are at risk for pre-diabetes by getting screened. Knowledge is power and middle age is a time of your life when you have a great opportunity to shape and control how you want to age.”

In Vermont, an estimated 40,000 people, mostly adults, have diabetes and 90,000 have "pre-diabetes," the condition that leads to diabetes unless excess body weight is lost or physical activity is increased.

To take the diabetes risk test, visit [healthvermont.gov](http://healthvermont.gov). You can also follow us on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/healthvermont>.

For more information on National Public Health Week “*A Healthier America, One Community at a Time*” visit: [www.nphw.org](http://www.nphw.org).

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