

Diabetes & You

Making the Link between Diabetes and Heart Disease

(NAPS)—When it comes to diabetes, heart disease and stroke, the statistics that link them are alarming.

Heart disease strikes people with diabetes more than twice as often as it strikes people without diabetes. It hits them earlier in life and it hits them harder. In fact, as many as 65 percent of people with diabetes die from heart disease and stroke.

Perhaps the most frightening issue is the lack of awareness about the link between diabetes and heart disease. And there are things that can help.

The American Diabetes Association and the American College of Cardiology are leading an effort to help educate people on this critically important topic. Make the Link! is a three-year initiative focused on reducing deaths associated with diabetes, heart disease and stroke. The initiative will encourage people with diabetes and their healthcare providers to work together to manage diabetes more comprehensively, to reduce risk factors that could lead to heart disease and stroke, and to remind people that diabetes management goes beyond controlling just blood sugar.

One way for people with diabetes to reduce their risk for heart disease and stroke is to know their diabetes ABCs. A is for A1C, short for the hemoglobin A1C test, which measures blood glucose over the past 3 months, B is for blood pressure, and C is for cholesterol. Target ranges are:

- A1C less than 7 percent.
- Blood Pressure less than 130/80 mmHg.
- Cholesterol-LDL (“bad”) less than 100 mg/dl.

But there are many ways to help break this link. Even small changes can lower the risks. Here are some suggestions:

- Keep blood glucose, cholesterol, and blood pressure numbers as close to normal as possible.
- Get help to quit smoking.
- Be active most days.
- Eat low-fat meals that are high in fruits and vegetables, and whole grain foods.
- Ask a healthcare provider about taking aspirin and other medications that can help reduce



People with diabetes should pay particular attention to their heart-health.

the chances of having a heart attack or stroke.

- Work closely with a healthcare provider to determine the best approach for treating diabetes and reducing the risk for heart disease and stroke.

Many tools are available to help you make and break the link...it could save your life. To find out more information, log onto www.diabetes.org/makethelink or call 1-800-DIABETES (1-800-342-2383).

The American Diabetes Association is the nation's leading voluntary health organization supporting diabetes research, information and advocacy for the 16 million Americans with the disease. Founded in 1940, the ADA has offices in every region of the country, providing services to hundreds of communities. The mission of the American Diabetes Association is to prevent and cure diabetes and to improve the lives of all people affected by diabetes.

The American College of Cardiology, a 27,000-member nonprofit, professional medical society and teaching institution, is dedicated to fostering optimal cardiovascular care and disease prevention through professional education, promotion of research, leadership in the development of standards and guidelines, and the formulation of healthcare policy.

The Make the Link! Initiative is made possible by generous support from the following corporate partners: AstraZeneca LP, Bayer Corporation, Bristol-Myers Squibb Company, Eli Lilly and Company, GlaxoSmithKline, Merck & Co., Inc. and Merck/Schering-Plough Pharmaceuticals, Monarch Pharmaceuticals and Wyeth-Ayerst Laboratories, Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation, and Pfizer Inc.