American Diabetes Association®
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News Release

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COVID Fears Kept One in Five People With Diabetes Away From the Doctor During Pandemic

Growing reports of dangerous new health conditions, hard-to-manage blood sugar now emerging

ARLINGTON, Va. (May 18, 2021) – A new study released today by the American Diabetes Association® in partnership with dQ&A, finds that growing numbers of people with diabetes have not only been forced to put off needed medical care since the outbreak of COVID-19, but that alarming numbers are struggling to manage their blood glucose levels.

Key survey results found:

- **Nearly 1 in 5** Americans with diabetes have skipped doctor's appointments since the start of the pandemic, principally due to fear of contracting the virus;
- **1 in 4** people with diabetes report having trouble controlling their blood glucose levels during the public health emergency; and
- **1 in 10** adults with diabetes say they have developed new health complications like high blood pressure, heart problems, peripheral artery disease, and eye disorders since last March.

While an increase in diabetes complications puts the diabetes community at a heightened long-term risk, poor glycemic control also leaves people with diabetes especially vulnerable to adverse COVID-19 outcomes should they catch the coronavirus in the near term.

Dr. Robert Gabbay, ADA Chief Scientific and Medical Officer, said, “Over the past year, we’ve witnessed a grossly disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on the health and safety of Americans living with diabetes. As a community, and as a nation, we must work to bring more resources–from expanded access to diabetes technology and telemedicine to expanded programs for healthy food and beverages–to the 34 million Americans who have diabetes. We must also acknowledge and address the systemic barriers that prevent many people with diabetes from staying safe and healthy, through the end of this pandemic and beyond.”

The results of this survey were compiled from a national online poll of 5,645 people with diabetes between March 4th, 2021, and March 16th, 2021, with margins of error of +/- 2% percent.

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About the American Diabetes Association

Every day, more than 4,000 people are newly diagnosed with diabetes in America. More than 122 million Americans have diabetes or prediabetes and are striving to manage their lives while living with the disease. The ADA is the nation’s leading voluntary health organization fighting to bend the curve on the diabetes epidemic and helping people living with diabetes thrive. For 80 years, the ADA has been driving discovery and research to treat, manage and prevent diabetes, while working relentlessly for a cure. We help people with diabetes thrive by fighting for their rights and developing programs, advocacy, and education designed to improve their quality of life. Diabetes has brought us together, what we do next will make us Connected for Life. To learn more or to get involved, visit us at diabetes.org or call 1-800-DIABETES (800-342-2383). Join the fight with us on Facebook (American Diabetes Association), Twitter (@AmDiabetesAssn), and Instagram (@AmDiabetesAssn).

About dQ&A – The Diabetes Research Company

dQ&A is a social enterprise that’s committed to making life better for people with diabetes. We harness patient voices to help develop better tools and policies for people with diabetes and improve health outcomes. For over ten years, we have been tracking the experiences and opinions of people with diabetes in the United States, Canada and Europe. We are trusted by patients because of our independence and commitment to them. Our team has decades of experience in quantitative and qualitative research and a deep knowledge of diabetes. Many of our own lives have been touched by diabetes, so we have a personal stake in our work. To learn more and to see research highlights, you can visit us at d-qa.com and follow us on LinkedIn (dQ&A - The Diabetes Research Company), Facebook (@dQandA) and Twitter (@dQAresearch).