



-FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE-
**November is National Diabetes Month:
Knowing Risks Can Lead to Prevention**

(SALEM, OHIO) – November 10, 2021 – More than 34 million Americans are living with diabetes, yet one in five of them don't know they have it.

With November being National Diabetes Month, Family Medicine physician Steven Swain, M.D., FAAFP, outlined the symptoms of diabetes, along with risk factors and prevention tips. Dr. Swain is affiliated with Salem Regional Medical Center's (SRMC) medical staff and SRMC Primary Care – Salem.

"Diabetes is a chronic disease that occurs when the body is unable to produce or properly use insulin, a hormone that helps turn the food we eat into energy," Dr. Swain said. "This causes a person's blood glucose or sugar levels to rise higher than normal."

The most common form of diabetes is Type 2, typically occurring in older adults, although it can occur at any age.

"Symptoms often develop slowly over time and may include fatigue, increased thirst, frequent urination, unexplained weight loss and blurred vision. If left untreated, diabetes can lead to serious health complications such as heart disease, stroke, kidney failure, nerve damage and vision loss," Dr. Swain continued.

Risk Factors

According to Dr. Swain, knowing the risk factors for diabetes can help people be aware of their potential for developing the disease and take steps to prevent it.

Risk factors for type 2 diabetes include:

- Being age 45 and older
- Being overweight or obese
- Having a family history (parent or sibling) of the disease
- Physical inactivity
- Having high blood pressure
- Smoking
- Having gestational diabetes (diabetes during pregnancy) or giving birth to a baby weighing over 9 pounds



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- Being African-American, Hispanic, Native American, Asian-American race or Pacific Islander

Prevention

“While there are some risk factors a person cannot control, you can help prevent or delay type 2 diabetes by making some healthy lifestyle changes,” said Dr. Swain, who shared several prevention tips below.

Lose extra weight:

If you are overweight, work with your health care provider to develop a healthy weight-loss plan.

Eat healthier:

Eating a well-balanced diet can reduce your risk of diabetes and other conditions like heart disease, stroke and obesity.

“As a general rule, a healthy meal plan consists of a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy products and lean meats. Limit foods and drinks that are high in added sugar, salt and saturated fat,” he said.

Get regular physical activity:

In addition to helping you maintain a healthy weight, regular physical activity can help your body use its own insulin more effectively.

“Most adults should aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity each week. If you haven’t exercised in a while, I recommend talking with your health care provider before beginning an exercise routine,” Dr. Swain advised.

Stop Smoking:

According to Dr. Swain, studies have shown that people who smoke are 30 to 40 percent more likely to develop type 2 diabetes than non-smokers, along with having an increased risk for other diseases like cancer, heart attack and stroke. If you’re finding it hard to stop smoking, get information from your health care provider about options and resources to help you quit.

Board certified Family Medicine physician Steven Swain, M.D., FAAFP, sees patients of all ages at SRMC Primary Care – Salem, located at 2235 East Pershing Street in Salem. Appointments with Dr. Swain can be scheduled by calling 330-332-7803.

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