



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nov. 10, 2017

Contact: Cynthia Townsend
cynthia.townsend@globalhealth.com
(Office) 918.878.7335

Oklahoma HMO provides diabetes awareness tips

November is American Diabetes Month; more than 30 million adults have diabetes

OKLAHOMA – Diabetes is the seventh leading cause of death in the United States with more than 30 million adults having the disease, and a quarter of them unaware that they have it, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). November is American Diabetes Month and GlobalHealth, an Oklahoma-based health maintenance organization (HMO), is urging Oklahomans to become aware of the disease and educate themselves on the signs and symptoms for early detection.

“Education is key for those with diabetes as well as those who may have prediabetes,” said Dr. Wesley Williams, medical director at GlobalHealth. “Understanding diabetes, keeping regular follow-up appointments and maintaining patient involvement are critical factors to managing diabetes. Maintaining a healthy diet, regular exercise and continuously monitoring your health are key in decreasing the likelihood of needing pharmaceutical treatment and preventing the multitude of complications associated with the disease.”

This November, GlobalHealth is offering Oklahomans the following diabetes awareness tips:

Know the disease. Diabetes is a chronic disease that affects how your body turns food into energy, according to the CDC. Most of the food you eat is broken down into sugar, also called glucose, and released into your bloodstream. Your pancreas makes a hormone called insulin, which acts like a key to let the blood sugar into your body’s cells for use as energy. If you have diabetes, your body either doesn’t make enough insulin or can’t use the insulin it makes as well as it should. When there isn’t enough insulin or cells stop responding to insulin, too much blood sugar stays in your bloodstream, which over time can cause serious health problems, such as heart disease, vision loss and kidney disease.

Know the types. Type 1 diabetes, formerly called juvenile diabetes, accounts for roughly 5 percent of all diagnosed cases. In this type of diabetes, the pancreas does not make a sufficient amount of insulin. Type 2 diabetes, formerly called adult-onset diabetes, may account for about 90 to 95 percent of all diagnosed cases. In this case, insulin is produced in the pancreas but the body does not effectively utilize it. Gestational diabetes develops in pregnant woman who have

never had diabetes, and can cause problems for mothers and babies. Prediabetes occurs in more than 84 million U.S. adults, with 90 percent of these individuals being unaware they have prediabetes. This is a serious condition where blood sugar levels are higher than normal, but not high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes, according to the CDC. Prediabetes increases the risk for Type 2 diabetes, heart disease and stroke.

Know the symptoms. Oklahomans are at risk for prediabetes if they are overweight, are 45 years or older, have a parent or sibling with Type 2 diabetes and are physically active less than three times a week, according to the CDC. Symptoms of Type 2 diabetes are: frequent urination, excessive thirst, unexplained weight loss, extreme hunger, sudden vision changes, tingling or numbness in hands or feet, feeling very tired, having very dry skin, sores that are slow to heal and more infections than usual. Visit with your primary care physician if you suspect you might have diabetes.

Follow the recommendations. Maintaining a healthy diet and being active are two important parts of controlling diabetes. Eat smaller portions and limit foods that are high in saturated fats or trans fats such as: fatty cuts of meat, fried foods, whole milk, cakes, candy, cookies, crackers, shortening, stick margarine, nondairy creamers, pies and salad dressings, according to the CDC. Physical activity can help you control blood glucose, weight and blood pressure, and experts recommend moderate-intensity physical activity for at least 30 minutes on five or more days a week, according to the CDC. Examples include walking briskly, mowing the lawn, dancing, swimming or bicycling. Most of all, GlobalHealth recommends communicating with your primary care physician to discuss treatment options, tests and local resources.

About GlobalHealth

GlobalHealth is changing health insurance in Oklahoma. As an industry leader, GlobalHealth is an Oklahoma-based health maintenance organization covering more than 44,000 individuals in all 77 Oklahoma counties. Working proactively with each member, GlobalHealth engages a personalized management plan to address their specific needs and ensure the best possible health outcomes. GlobalHealth utilizes cutting edge, predictive data technology as a foundation to deliver improved healthcare as part of its commitment to making health insurance more affordable. Its membership includes state and education employees, federal employees, municipal employees and Medicare Advantage members. GlobalHealth employs more than 250 associates throughout Oklahoma. To learn more, visit www.GlobalHealth.com.

###