



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Oklahoma HMO provides information for National Diabetes Month

1.5 million Americans diagnosed with diabetes each year

OKLAHOMA – According to the Diabetes Research Institute, more than 30 million people, or 9.4% of the U.S. population, have diabetes and 7.2 million cases go undiagnosed each year. November is National Diabetes Month and GlobalHealth, an Oklahoma-based health insurance provider, is providing information to educate Oklahomans on diabetes care and encourage them to talk to their primary care physicians (PCP) about healthy eating and exercise habits.

“Diabetes is increasing at an alarming rate in the United States but, if you are diabetic, taking care of yourself does not have to be daunting or scary,” said Dr. Wesley Williams, medical director at GlobalHealth. “Managing diabetes can be easier with the help of your PCP. There are many factors that go into diabetes care, and you can keep yourself healthy by staying proactive when it comes to the disease.”

GlobalHealth is providing information to help raise awareness of diabetes.

There are two types of diabetes; Type 1 and Type 2, and both consist of a symptom called hyperglycemia, or high blood sugar.

Type 1 Diabetes. While people of all ages can develop Type 1 diabetes, it usually develops in children and teenagers, and is the most severe form of the disease. In this type of diabetes, insulin-producing cells in the pancreas are attacked by the body’s immune system and the person can no longer produce their own insulin. Because of this, Type 1 diabetics are insulin-dependent and must work with their PCP to manage their blood sugar closely. If left untreated, high blood sugar levels can damage one’s eyes, kidneys, nerves and heart, and may lead to coma or death.

Type 2 Diabetes. Also called non-insulin dependent diabetes, Type 2 is the most common form of diabetes and typically develops after age 35. Though their bodies can still produce insulin, those with Type 2 do not use it properly or do not make enough, and their pancreas cannot keep up with sugar intake over time. This type of diabetes is often tied to people who are overweight, and a growing number of younger people are now developing Type 2 diabetes.

Regular Testing. Whether you have Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes, it is important to talk to your PCP to ensure you are properly managing the disease. Have your A1C levels checked at least twice a year and more often if your PCP recommends it. You should also have a urine test at least once a year to check for protein or microalbumin. Diabetes can lead to kidney problems, so a urine test is an effective way to check your kidney health. Getting a diabetic eye exam at least once a year can help you catch retinopathy, cataracts or glaucoma early, because, if left untreated, they can cause blindness.

Living with Diabetes. By living a healthy lifestyle, exercising and eating right, you can have a good quality of life with diabetes. Check your blood sugar often and work on keeping it and your blood pressure in a healthy range. The National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases recommends keeping your blood pressure below 140/90 mm Hg. Plan ahead when traveling to avoid a diabetic emergency and always take any prescribed medicine as directed. If you're a diabetic over the age of 40, discuss statins with your PCP, which can help lower cholesterol levels and reduce blood pressure and heart attack risk.

If you have been diagnosed with diabetes, ask your PCP about Diabetes Self-Management Education and Support (DSMES). DSMES is a service to help people navigate a diabetes diagnosis. You can also talk to your PCP about joining a support group to help manage the feelings that might accompany living with diabetes.

About GlobalHealth

GlobalHealth is changing health insurance in Oklahoma. As an industry leader, GlobalHealth is an Oklahoma-based health maintenance organization covering individuals in all 77 Oklahoma counties. Working proactively with its members, 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, education and municipal employees, federal employees, and individuals who are eligible for Medicare. To learn more, visit www.GlobalHealth.com.

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