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DOH LAUNCHES BEAT DIABETES PREVENTION PROGRAM

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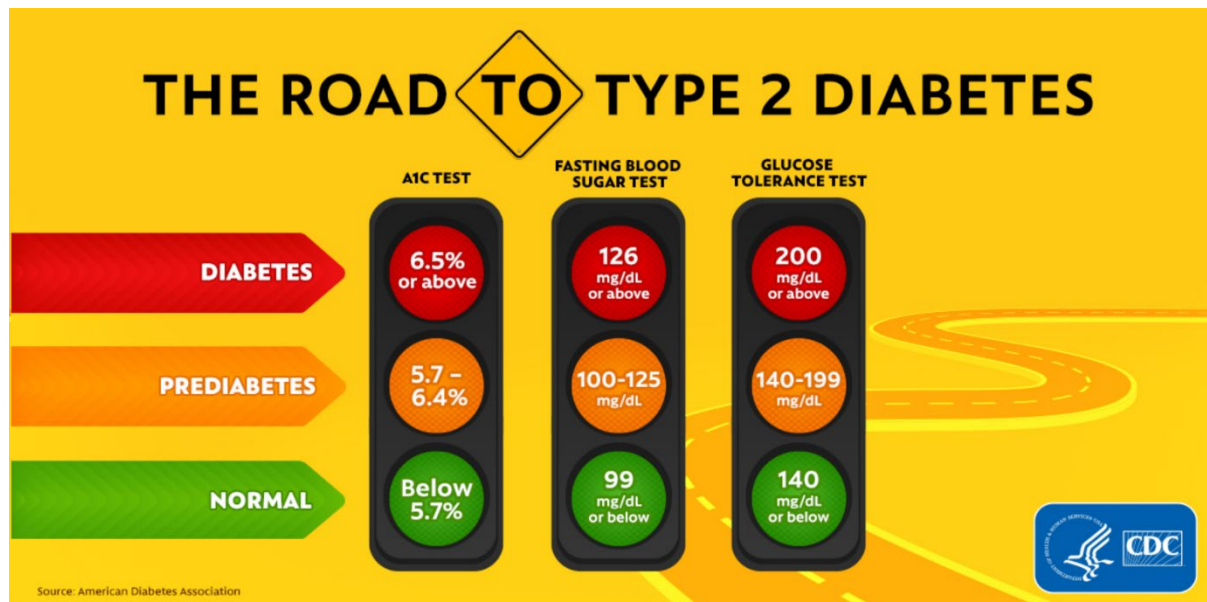
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HONOLULU – The Hawai'i State Department of Health (DOH) recently launched a new public service announcement campaign to motivate people with prediabetes to adopt healthier behaviors to prevent Type 2 diabetes. The public is encouraged to take the [Prediabetes Risk Assessment](#) and talk with a health care provider about the need for additional testing. For people with blood glucose levels in the prediabetes range, participation in a lifestyle change program, like the [Beat Diabetes Prevention Program](#), can lower the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes.

Type 2 diabetes is the seventh leading cause of death in Hawai'i and the number one cause of blindness, kidney failure, and lower limb amputations in the U.S. Diabetes complications are caused by high blood glucose, also known as blood sugar that damages small blood vessels and nerves. People with prediabetes do not yet have blood sugar levels in the diabetes range, but are at high risk for developing diabetes.

“We should be investing more in preventing diabetes than expanding dialysis capacity,” said state Director of Health Dr. Kenneth Fink. “We unfortunately have significant health inequities with Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders having higher rates of diabetes and progression to kidney failure. Increasing prevention efforts and improving disease management will help address this.”



“The good news about prediabetes is that having it doesn’t automatically mean that you will develop diabetes,” said Lola Irvin, DOH Chronic Disease Prevention & Health Promotion Division administrator. “Making lifestyle changes to lose weight, such as eating healthier and increasing physical activity, can prevent the development of diabetes and may also reverse prediabetes back into the normal blood glucose range.”

For people with prediabetes, losing just 5-7% of body weight may reduce the chance of developing diabetes by more than 50% for adults at high risk. However, making the necessary lifestyle changes to prevent diabetes may feel overwhelming. Enrolling in a lifestyle change program like the Beat Diabetes Prevention Program can be the easy first step to help build new, healthy habits. Participants will join a group of people with prediabetes and learn from a trained lifestyle coach.

“My role is to guide our participants through a certified Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) diabetes prevention program, providing support and encouragement as they go through their journey to a healthier lifestyle to prevent Type 2 diabetes,” said Jen Valera, a master life coach with the Hawai‘i Primary Care Association.

Previous participants have highlighted how the program and the group support have led to positive life changes:

- *“Having the support of others helps me stay motivated. When I’m not feeling up to eating healthy or exercising, they help me through it.” - Cory A.*
- *“The program started my weight loss journey. It’s inspired me to do a lot of things in life, and I’ve come a long way.” – Lei K.*

The Beat Diabetes campaign emphasizes preventing diabetes in the prediabetes stage to avoid its serious complications. It will run through October 2024 statewide and will include TV, radio, print, digital, social media, and mall advertisements. To take the Prediabetes Risk Test or sign up for the Beat Diabetes Prevention Program, visit BeatDiabetes.hawaii.gov.

WE'RE FIGHTING DIABETES NOW, BEFORE WE GET IT.



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