EBENEZER MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

DIABETES AWARENESS

Why it matters for African Americans

Know your numbers. Protect your health.
Preserve your future.

A church health ministry conversation about awareness, prevention, and support

Why diabetes awareness matters

It can go unnoticed

Type 2 diabetes may develop gradually. Some people have no clear symptoms.

It can affect the whole body

Over time, high blood sugar can damage the heart, kidneys, eyes, nerves, and blood vessels.

Early action matters

Screening, treatment, and daily habits can help prevent or delay complications.

Awareness is not about fear or blame. It is about having the information and support to take the next healthy step.

What the numbers tell us

12.4%

of non-Hispanic Black adults had diagnosed diabetes in 2024, compared with 10.0% of U.S. adults overall.

24% more likely

Black/African American adults were more likely than U.S. adults overall to have diabetes in 2024.

These differences reflect more than individual choices. Access to healthy food, safe places to exercise, quality care, stress, and other social conditions can affect risk.

Source: U.S. HHS Office of Minority Health, Diabetes and Black/African Americans.

Diabetes: what is happening in the body?

How it works

Glucose (sugar) enters the bloodstream after we eat. Insulin helps move glucose into the body's cells for energy. With diabetes, the body does not make enough insulin or cannot use it well.

Types to know

- Type 1: the body makes little or no insulin.
- Type 2: the body does not use insulin effectively and may not make enough.
- Gestational: diabetes diagnosed during pregnancy.

This presentation focuses mainly on Type 2 diabetes while recognizing that all types deserve care and understanding.

Who may be at higher risk?

- Having a parent, brother, or sister with Type 2 diabetes.
- Being age 45 or older (though younger people can develop it too).
- Having prediabetes or a history of gestational diabetes.
- Being physically inactive or having overweight.
- Having high blood pressure or other health risk factors.

Remember

Risk is not destiny. A person's race does not determine their health. Genetics, environment, access to resources, and life circumstances all matter.

Talk with a healthcare professional about your personal risk and when you should be tested.

Know the signs. Get screened.

Possible symptoms

- Increased thirst or frequent urination
- Feeling very hungry or tired
- Blurry vision
- Unexplained weight loss
- Slow-healing sores or frequent infections

Screening saves time

A blood test can identify prediabetes or diabetes. Ask your healthcare professional which test is right for you and how often you need it.

Important: Some people have no symptoms. Do not wait until you feel sick to ask about screening.

Small steps can make a real difference

Eat with balance

Choose vegetables, fruit, beans, whole grains, and lean proteins. Watch portions and sugary drinks.

Move more

Build toward 150 minutes of moderate activity each week, if safe for you. Start with a walk.

Keep appointments

Know your blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol numbers. Take medicines as prescribed.

Care for your feet and eyes

Keep routine eye exams and check your feet regularly, especially if you have diabetes.

Ask for support

Family, friends, faith communities, and healthcare teams can help you stay encouraged.

Choose one realistic change to begin this week. Consistency matters more than perfection.

Why managing diabetes is important

- Heart and blood vessel disease, including heart attack and stroke.
- Kidney disease and, in severe cases, kidney failure.
- Nerve damage, pain, numbness, and foot problems.
- Eye disease and vision loss.

Good blood sugar management and regular medical care can lower the risk of many complications.

A HEALTHIER CHURCH. A HEALTHIER COMMUNITY.

What is one step you can take this week?

- Schedule a diabetes screening or checkup.
- Take a 10–15 minute walk and build from there.
- Replace one sugary drink with water.
- Ask a family member about your family's health history.

“Let’s prioritize our health—for ourselves, our families, and our church family.”

Jeremiah 29:11 • With knowledge, support, and faith, let’s take the next step.