

## THE BURDEN OF DIABETES IN NEBRASKA: AN UPDATE

- In 2004, Nebraska's Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) estimated that 6.3% of Nebraska adults had diagnosed diabetes, excluding cases of gestational diabetes, borderline diabetes, and pre-diabetes. This figure translates into a statewide diabetic population of about 82,000 people. Nebraska's 2004 diabetes prevalence rate also represents a significant increase from the rate of 4.4% recorded just a decade ago, in 1995.
- Diabetes disproportionately affects Nebraska's elderly. In 2004, almost one of every six (15.5%) people 65 years of age and older had been diagnosed with diabetes.
- Obesity is an important risk factor for diabetes, and the 2004 BRFSS data show that close to one in four (23.2%) Nebraska adults are now obese. The prevalence of obesity among Nebraska adults has more than doubled in recent years; in 1990, the rate stood at 11.6%. The 2004 BRFSS data also show that an additional 38.6% of Nebraska adults had a BMI (body mass index) which placed them in the overweight category. Nebraska adults with diabetes are more than twice as likely to be obese as those without it (49.0% vs. 20.7% [2002-4 BRFSS]).
- Nearly two-thirds (65.8%) of Nebraska adults with diabetes reported (on the 2002-4 BRFSS) having had a flu shot within the past year and about half (51.3%) reported having ever had a vaccination for pneumonia. During the same years, 74.8% of Nebraska adults with diabetes reported having two or more HbA1c tests within the past year, 74.0% reported having a dilated eye exam within the past year, and 70.2% reported having a foot exam by a health care professional within the past year. All of these figures represent improvement over previously-reported BRFSS findings.
- During the past five years (2000-4), people with diabetes accounted for about 123,000 in-patient hospitalizations in Nebraska. This figure represents about one of every eight (12.7%) hospitalizations that occurred in Nebraska during these years. The total cost of in-patient diabetes-related hospitalizations in Nebraska during 2000-4 was almost \$2.2 billion, at an average cost of \$17,659 per hospital stay.
- In 2003, people with diabetes accounted for more than two of every five (42.4%) cases of end-stage renal disease (ESRD) diagnosed among Nebraska residents. Since 1999, Nebraska has recorded more than 200 new cases of diabetes-related ESRD per year; by contrast, 1991 marked the first year during which diabetes-related ESRD diagnoses exceeded 100. However, after peaking at 235 diagnoses in 2001, the number of new cases of diabetes-related ESRD in Nebraska has since fallen, to 204 in 2002 and 208 in 2003.
- In 2004, diabetes was the seventh leading cause of death among Nebraska residents, accounting for 395 deaths. However, when all diabetes-related deaths are accounted for (i.e., deaths for which diabetes was listed on the death certificate as the underlying or a contributing cause of death), this number expands to 1,353. The number and rate of diabetes deaths in Nebraska increased substantially during the 1990s, but appears to have reached a plateau since 2000.
- Certain minority populations suffer disproportionately from diabetes. Data collected by Nebraska's BRFSS and Minority BRFSS during 2001-2 show the prevalence of diabetes among Hispanics at 6.8%, African-Americans at 10.3%, and Native Americans at 12.9%, compared to 6.1% for whites. Nebraska mortality data show the same pattern: during 2002-4, the rate for all diabetes-related deaths was 114.9 (deaths per 100,000 population per year) for Hispanics, 172.1 for African-Americans, and 265.2 for Native Americans, compared to 69.8 for whites.

