



The Relationship Between Type 2 Diabetes and Cardiovascular Disease—It's Complicated

A Patient Education Resource from The National Diabetes Education Initiative® (NDEI®)

Type 2 diabetes and *cardiovascular disease (CVD)* are closely linked. CVD is also called *heart disease*. People who have type 2 diabetes are at higher risk for getting CVD than people who don't have diabetes. In fact, studies have shown that the chance of getting CVD when you have type 2 diabetes is two to four times higher than when you don't have diabetes.

Type 2 diabetes is on the rise in the United States

More people in the US have type 2 diabetes than ever before.

Type 2 diabetes is the strongest risk factor for CVD

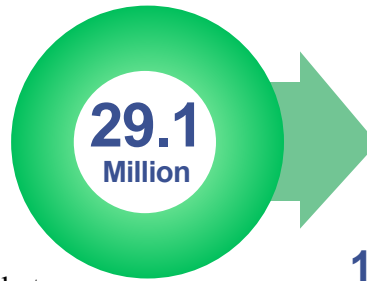
A risk factor is something that increases your chance for getting an illness or disease. As more people get type 2 diabetes, more will also get cardiovascular illnesses like heart attack, stroke, and heart failure.

CVD is a major cause of illness, injury, and even death in people with type 2 diabetes. When you have type 2 diabetes, your chances of surviving a CVD illness like a stroke or a heart attack are lower.

But it's not the only risk factor

Many other risk factors in addition to type 2 diabetes put you at higher risk for CVD:

- Being overweight or obese
- Having high blood pressure (*hypertension*)
- Having high cholesterol
- Being a smoker
- Having a family history of heart disease



1 out of 3 adults will develop type 2 diabetes in their lifetime



More than 90% of people with type 2 diabetes have one or more of these risk factors

Reducing your risk for CVD starts with good diabetes control

Keeping your blood glucose in check is priority number one when it comes to good diabetes care, and slowing down or preventing CVD.

The American Diabetes Association (ADA) and American Heart Association (AHA) suggest that people with type 2 diabetes keep their A1C at **7.0% or lower**. A1C is a measure of your blood glucose over 3 months.

Your personal A1C target may be higher or lower than 7.0%. Your diabetes healthcare team will work with you to set a target that is right for you.

In addition to controlling your blood glucose, there are other important things you can do to lower your risk for CVD:

- Lose weight if you're overweight or obese
- Stop smoking if you're a smoker
- Control your **LDL-C ("bad" cholesterol)** to **less than 100 mg/dL** and **<70 mg/dL if you have type 2 diabetes and heart disease**
- Control your **blood pressure** to **less than 130/80 mm Hg**



NATIONAL DIABETES EDUCATION INITIATIVE™

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:
TALK WITH YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER**

REFERENCES: American Diabetes Association. Standards of medical care in diabetes—2015. *Diabetes Care*. 2015;38(suppl 1):S1-S93. • Fox CS, Golden SH, Anderson C, et al. Update on prevention of cardiovascular disease in adults with type 2 diabetes mellitus in light of recent evidence: A scientific statement from the American Heart Association and the American Diabetes Association. *Diabetes Care*. 2015; 2015; doi:10.2337/dc15-0258. • Diabetes and Heart Disease — An Intimate Connection. Available at: http://joslin.org/info/diabetes_and_heart_disease_an_intimate_connection.html. Accessed September 2015.

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