



## NJ 2-1-1 provides resources for public concerning diabetes prevention

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154



WHIPPANY — NJ 2-1-1 is supporting the State of New Jersey Department of Health (DOH) in its effort to link New Jerseyans with community-based resources that are focused on dealing with a critical public health concern: preventing and managing diabetes.

Type 2 diabetes, also commonly known as “adult onset” diabetes, is on the rise in our state, though it can be prevented and its symptoms can be reduced or eliminated by taking active steps. By partnering with NJ 2-1-1, the Department of Health will leverage NJ 2-1-1’s extensive network to inform New Jersey residents about this initiative and get them connected with programs in their community that may lead to better health and a healthier lifestyle.

The DOH is participating in the national Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP), a year-long program aimed at preventing type 2 diabetes, and is launching this information campaign to reach the public and help people realize better health outcomes in the face of concerning data. Diabetes, a disease that results in high glucose levels in a person’s blood which prevents the body from using insulin properly, is the sixth leading cause of death in the state among adults. Almost one-third of New Jersey adult residents age 25-65 have diabetes, a trend that has worsened over the years. From 1996 to 2010, the estimated rate of new adult diabetes cases more than doubled in New Jersey. Although diabetes can lead to many serious health issues, treatment and healthy lifestyle habits can prevent or delay these complications.

“NJ 2-1-1 is a lead partner with DOH and is committed to providing the most up-to-date information on diabetes prevention and education to its callers and website visitors,” states Gina Plotino, board chairperson of the NJ 2-1-1 Partnership. “NJ 2-1-1 was created to connect those in need of assistance with those who can help, and our role in the Diabetes Prevention Program allows us to do just that.” As part of this initiative, when callers express an interest in learning more on this topic, 2-1-1 call specialists will provide them with information about programs in their area that offer diabetes prevention and education assistance. In just the first six weeks of the initiative, NJ 2-1-1 reached over 4,200 people with details about the program.

At present there are nearly a hundred diabetes management and prevention programs that are participating around the state. People may dial 2-1-1 from any phone in the state (mobile or landline) and speak with a call specialist who will provide them with local resources, or they can search the database online at [www.nj211.org](http://www.nj211.org) using the search term “Diabetes Management Clinics.” Visitors to the site can learn more by reading the page devoted to the [Diabetes Management and Prevention Program](#).

The diabetes initiative with DOH is NJ 2-1-1’s newest public health resource. Information about other health-related topics can be accessed on the organization’s website, and local resources are easily found by searching the online database or calling NJ 2-1-1. Recently added health-related web pages include coverage of the [Zika virus](#) and [lead poisoning](#).

### **About NJ 2-1-1**

The statewide information and referral service began in 2002 when the United Ways of NJ spearheaded efforts to give concerned people an easy way to find health and human services, and the Board of Public Utilities designated the NJ 2-1-1 Partnership as the sole administrator of the three-digit dialing code. Statewide coverage began in 2005. In 2015 alone, the NJ 2-1-1 Partnership provided resource assistance to over 372,000 people who called 2-1-1 or visited the website. With roughly 3,000 agencies in the organization’s resource database and over 10,000 programs and services listed, NJ 2-1-1 provides the public with front door access to non-profit, government and faith-based services, as well as disaster response information.