

Diabetes in Santa Clara County

What is Diabetes?

Diabetes is a set of diseases that occur when glucose (sugar) builds up in your blood. It is caused by problems with insulin, a hormone that helps your body use glucose. Glucose provides energy to your body. It is found in carbohydrates in food.¹

Common Types of Diabetes

Type 1 develops when the pancreas (an organ near your stomach) stops making insulin. Type 1 often starts in childhood, but adults can develop it.¹

Type 2 develops when the pancreas slows down its production of insulin or the body cannot use the insulin. Type 2 diabetes is on the rise worldwide. About 95% of all diabetes cases are type 2.¹ Most cases occur among adults.

Gestational diabetes (GDM) affects women during pregnancy and usually goes away after pregnancy. Between 2-10% of women have had GDM.³

How Many Adults in Santa Clara County have Diabetes?

In 2013-14, 8% of Santa Clara County (SCC) adults (about 112,000 people) reported having ever been diagnosed with diabetes (type 1 or 2). This is an increase from 5% in the year 2000.^{a2} Many people with diabetes do not know that they have the disease. It is likely that the actual number of adults with diabetes in SCC is higher.

Who is at Risk for Diabetes?

Type 1: We know that some genes can increase the risk of type 1 diabetes, but we do not know what triggers it or how to prevent it. Having a family history of type 1 may put you at greater risk.¹

Type 2: Many people are at increased risk for type 2 diabetes.

- **Older adults:** Diabetes is more common among older adults.¹ In SCC, 18% of adults ages 65 and older reported having been diagnosed with diabetes.²
- **Overweight and obese adults:** Slightly more than half of SCC adults (54%) were overweight (34%) or obese (20%) in 2013-14.²
- **Ethnic groups** other than non-Hispanic white experience more type 2 diabetes.¹ In SCC, 11% of Latino, and 10% of African American adults reported having been diagnosed with diabetes.
- **People with a family history of diabetes:** Genes and shared lifestyle patterns like diet and exercise play a role.¹
- **People with low levels of physical activity:** In 2013-14, a little over half (58%) of SCC adults reported achieving the CDC's recommended amount of physical activity.²
- **Women who had GDM:** Between 35-60% of women who had GDM will develop type 2 diabetes later in life.³ In 2012, the rate of gestational diabetes at delivery was 12.9 per 100 females ages 15 to 44 in SCC, higher than the California rate of 9.0.⁶
- **Adults with cardiovascular disease and cardiovascular risk factors:** In 2013-14, 27% of SCC adults reported having been diagnosed with high blood pressure and 32% reported ever having been diagnosed with high cholesterol.²
- **Adults with prediabetes:** 15-30% of people with prediabetes will develop type 2 diabetes within 5 years.³ In 2013-14, 10% of SCC adults (approx. 140,500 people) reported having ever been diagnosed with prediabetes. This is likely a dramatic undercount, because according to the CDC approximately 1 in 3 U.S. adults has prediabetes⁵, but 9 out of 10 people with prediabetes do not know they have it.⁴

^a Note: Due to changes in the BRFS survey methodology in 2013-14, estimates from 2013-14 are not directly comparable to estimates from prior surveys. Any differences

in estimates between 2013-14 and prior surveys should be interpreted with caution, as these may be partially due to changes in methods

Cost of Diabetes

According to the CDC, diabetes costs the U.S. \$245 billion per year. \$176 billion is spent on direct medical costs. The average medical expenditure for

people diagnosed with diabetes is more than twice as high (2.3 times higher) than for people without diabetes. Indirect costs of diabetes are estimated at \$69 billion per year due to disability, work loss or premature death.⁵

References

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