

TAKING ON TYPE 2 DIABETES

INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS PROVIDE SUPPORT

BY MICHAEL RONEY

In the United States, diabetes is a growing epidemic, with nearly 26 million Americans estimated to have diabetes today. Diabetes is associated with high blood pressure and high cholesterol. In fact, diabetes doubles and potentially quadruples the risk of stroke or death from heart disease compared to those without the disease. Although there are many risk factors that increase the risk of developing type 2 diabetes, it can be compounded by poor eating habits and lack of exercise, as shown by growing US obesity rates. It is estimated that by the year 2050, as many as 1 in 3 Americans may have diabetes (diagnosed and undiagnosed), which is increased from the current prevalence of 1 in 10 adults.

But there's a silver lining: "Fortunately, today there is more support than ever before for helping patients to better understand type 2 diabetes and then to make informed choices with their health care team to help manage it," says Peter Alberti, Executive Director, US Diabetes Marketing, Merck. "There have been many innovations in the ways in which patients can get information to help them with diet, exercise, and following their medical regimen, by tailoring actions to their own condition."

Patients with diabetes have to manage the disease with more than just annual doctor visits. Support systems and lifestyle changes are crucial to any successful diabetes treatment plan.

Increased Understanding Helps Lead to Better Disease Management

There are numerous resources available that cover different aspects of managing type 2 diabetes. Merck is committed to not only increasing awareness of the disease, but also helping patients better understand how to manage it.

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— Peter Alberti,
Executive Director, US Diabetes Marketing, Merck



"It's so important to drive that deeper understanding as patients go through their own personal diabetes journey," Alberti says. "Changes in diet, physical activity, and following the treatment regimen that a health care provider prescribes are all important aspects of their overall treatment plan."

Merck has a strong commitment to developing patient education and patient workshop programs dedicated to promoting an engaged understanding of diabetes, including:

- **Taking Diabetes to Heart:** Through takingdiabetestoheart.com and other forms of communications, adults with type 2 diabetes can learn tips to help manage blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol. Through this, patients may help lower their risk for heart disease.
- **Journey for Control:** Certified diabetes educators, conversation maps, and other resources drive a series of small group interactions designed to help patients by giving them the information and tools they can use to make lifestyle changes and better understand how to live with diabetes.
- **Blood Sugar Basics:** Launched by the American College of Endocrinology with support from Merck, patients with diabetes and their loved ones focus on the importance of blood sugar control with an emphasis on education about high and low blood sugar as part of a successful diabetes management plan.

Additional patient support comes from public campaigns such as Diabetes Restaurant Month, which challenges local restaurants in cities around the United States to make popular dishes diabetes friendly.

Comprehensive Treatment Plans Remain Invaluable

Alberti recommends that people with type 2 diabetes talk to their health care provider to adapt a comprehensive treatment plan for diabetes management. "Somebody who is engaged and doing all of the right things is going to have the best shot at effectively managing his or her disease," he adds.

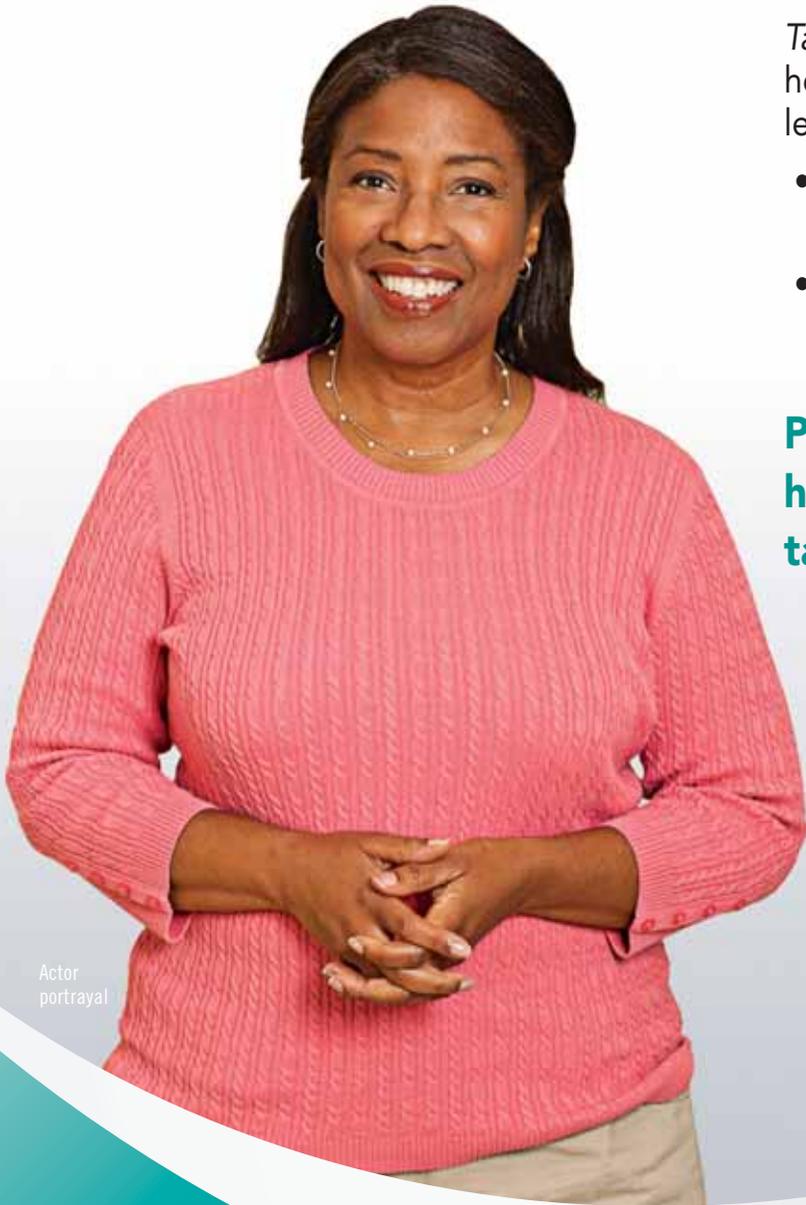
"Merck is committed to advancing both the medical community's and patient's understanding of type 2 diabetes management," Alberti says. "With our research, the medications that we market, and our educational programs, we are fortunate to be able to make a number of contributions that are designed to help so many patients." ■

RESOURCES

merckdiabetes.com
takingdiabetestoheart.com
JourneyForControl.com
bloodsugarbasics.com

Content developed with support of Merck.

I'm taking my **Diabetes to Heart** and you can too. Just visit takingdiabetestoheart.com.



Actor portrayal

Taking Diabetes to Heart is a program to help people living with type 2 diabetes learn more about the disease.

- Learn more about the ABCs (A1C, blood pressure, and cholesterol).
- Learn about the serious complications, including heart disease.

Pledge to take your diabetes to heart today. To learn more, visit takingdiabetestoheart.com.

