POSITIVE OUTLOOK

In this Issue

POSITIVE HEALTHCARE
CALIFORNIA

P.O. Box 46160
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Member Services
Mon - Fri, 8:00am to 8:00pm
Tel (800) 263-0067
TTY/TDD: 711

Diabetes

Diabetes is a group of diseases where problems with insulin give a person high blood sugar. There are three types of diabetes – Type 1, Type 2 and diabetes that happens when you are pregnant. Most people have Type 2. When you eat, your body turns food into glucose to give your cells energy. Glucose is a type of sugar. Your body makes insulin to help the glucose get into your cells. Diabetes begins when your insulin no longer works. This means the glucose stays in your blood and builds up in your body.

Risks

Diabetes occurs in people of all ages and races. It is more common in people of color and older adults. Some HIV pills raise the chance of getting this disease. There are three tests your doctor can use to find out if you are at risk or have diabetes:

- A1C test
- Fasting plasma glucose test (FPG)
- Oral glucose tolerance test (OGTT)

Treatment

Diet and exercise are not enough for some people. Your doctor may prescribe drug treatments for your diabetes. You may need to check how much glucose is in your blood a few times each day. Some need to inject insulin right into their skin.

Diabetes can cause many problems. When your blood sugar is not controlled, it can damage your eyes, liver, kidneys and heart. Your hands and feet might not get all the blood they need. This can cause numbness or pain. You should get eye exams, blood tests and have your blood pressure checked often. Check your feet every day for sores. You will protect your teeth and gums when you brush and floss your teeth each day and visit a dentist twice a year.

Protect Yourself

You can prevent and treat diabetes with a few simple steps.

- Keep a healthy weight to help your insulin work as it should
- Try to exercise at least 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week
- Eat a good diet with lots of fruits and vegetables to protect you from diabetes

When you have both HIV and diabetes, it can be hard to manage both. There are lots of ways to support your health. You are in control of the choices you make. You can talk to members of your health care team – doctor, RN Case Manager, pharmacist, or nutritionist – if you need help with treatment. For more info, go to: http://www.diabetes.org/

Say Yes to Life!

There are many dangers for people with HIV who drink too much or use drugs. These weaken your body and immune system. When your immune system is weak, HIV can grow quickly. You are more likely to pass the virus to someone else when you have a high viral load or poor judgment.

Why Does It Matter?

When you drink too much or use drugs, you can make choices that are bad for your health. You may:
- Take more risks
- Forget your medications
- Not eat a healthy diet
- Have unsafe sex

Many drugs and alcohol do not mix well with your HIV treatment. Your medication can make the drugs stronger or weaker than normal. You may need to take more drugs to feel the same effects. This could lead to an overdose or liver disease.

Do you have a problem?

Think about these questions:
- Do you use drugs or drink alone?
- Do you keep using even when it gets in the way of work, friends, or your love life?
- Do you lie about how much you use or drink? Do you hide your use?
- Has someone said they are worried about your drug or alcohol use?
- Does it seem too hard to think of life without drugs or alcohol?

If you said yes to any of these, you may have an addiction. You also have the power to make a positive change.

How Can I Get Help?

- Talk to Your Doctor. Your doctor can help you make a plan to quit. You may have symptoms when you stop using drugs or alcohol. Your doctor can help you deal with them.
- Commit to Quit. Set a date to stop using.
- Get Support. You do not need to go through this alone. They are many groups for people who struggle with addiction.

Alcoholics Anonymous www.aa.org
California: http://www.lacoaa.org 1-800-923-8722
Check website for local meetings.

Narcotics Anonymous http://www.na.org/
California: http://www.todayna.org 1-800-863-2962

Prevention Points

Prevention is key to a healthy life. Be sure to:

- ✔ Stay in touch with your doctor and RN Case Manager
- ✔ Get labs to check your viral load and CD4 count often
- ✔ Take your HIV medications daily
- ✔ Talk to your doctor about an Advance Directive Form (Five Wishes Guide)
- ✔ Talk to your doctor about tests to check for colon and rectal cancer
- ✔ Get an anal pap test each year
- ✔ Get a pap test of the cervix (women only)
- ✔ Work out 30 to 60 minutes, 5 days a week
- ✔ Eat 5 to 9 servings of fruits and vegetables daily
- ✔ Practice safer sex
- ✔ Stop smoking
- ✔ Limit alcohol use
- ✔ Stop illegal drug use
- ✔ See friends and be social for mental health and well-being

Ask Your Way to Better Health

Visits to the doctor can be stressful. You may not always leave with a clear picture of what you need to do. This can lead to problems with your treatment for HIV and other health issues. You can have less stress when you are prepared for your doctor visit. Your doctor will welcome any questions you have about your health. You should ask:

- About your main health concerns
- What you need to do after the visit
- If there are warning signs or side effects to look out for
- What you can expect to happen

Keep in Mind

Bring a list of all the medicine you take when you see your doctor. If you write questions down before you go in for a visit, you can write the answers next to them.

Your doctors want you to have the best care you can get. You can have better health when you know just what you need to do. You are in charge of your health, and asking questions can help.

The Choice is Yours

FIVE WISHES®

MY WISH FOR:

The Person I Want to Make Care Decisions for Me When I Can't

The Kind of Medical Treatment I Want or Don't Want

How Comfortable I Want to Be

How I Want People to Treat Me

What I Want My Loved Ones to Know

print your name

birthdate

Things in life are not always in our control. An accident or sudden illness can make you unable to make healthcare choices. You might fall into a coma or suffer brain damage. An advance directive, or living will, tells your doctors and loved ones just how you want to be treated if you cannot tell them yourself. This legal form lets you pick healthcare agents, people you choose to carry out your wishes. Positive Healthcare offers the *Five Wishes* advance directive form for you to tell others about your wishes.

Who to Choose?

Five Wishes tells your doctor and healthcare agents what kind of treatment you want and how you want to be cared for. Your agents can be people in your family, but they do not have to be. A good friend may be more likely to share your views on care.

It can be hard to know who to choose as an agent. End-of-life issues are tough to talk about, even when you are healthy. Your healthcare agent should be someone who:

- You trust to carry out your wishes
- Knows you very well
- Feels the same way as you about your care. This does not mean they can make any choices for you.

A copy of *Five Wishes* will go to your agents and your doctor. If you change your mind about who your agents should be, you can fill out a new form. With a *Five Wishes* form, you and your loved ones can have more peace of mind.

Think About Joining a Trial!

New drug trials and treatment studies start all the time. These help create better treatment for all people living with HIV/AIDS. There are many types of clinical trials. One may be perfect for you. Your doctor may ask you to join a trial. Think about it!

For more info call:
(323) 913-1033

A Message from Your Health Plan

Your Contact Information

Positive Healthcare California cares about you and your health. We need to know if you moved or got a new phone number in the past year. Please call Member Services to update your record.

Member Services
Monday-Friday 8:00am-8:00pm
Tel: (800) 263-0067   TTY/TTD: 711

Medication Therapy Management Program (MTMP)

As part of Positive Healthcare California, you are enrolled in the MTMP. This Program helps people who take many prescription drugs. The Program lowers the chance of medication mistakes and reactions. Your health care team will be in touch with you and your doctor. They will explain the drugs that you take. Your doctor will know of safety issues with the medications. Any other health issues will also be handled. An action plan with your RN Case Manager will help with any problems you may have. The action plan will know you know just how and when to take your meds.

Compliance Hotline

Help us look out for Medi-Cal fraud and abuse. For example, if your Explanation of Benefits lists charges that are wrong, call Member Services. Call our Compliance Hotline if you suspect possible fraud or abuse.

Compliance Hotline: (800) AIDS-HIV • (800) 243-7448

We want to hear from you!

The Client Advisory Committee is a great way to tell us what you think about your Health Plan! We welcome all Positive Healthcare members and AHF Healthcare Center clients. You can share your questions, concerns and comments with our Health Plan leaders. We use your concerns to make the Plan better. Come to the next meeting to find out what Positive Healthcare can do for you!

California - Los Angeles

Tues, July 31, 2012 6:00pm – 7:00pm

Tues, September 25, 2012 6:00pm - 7:00pm

6255 W. Sunset Blvd, 21st Floor

To RSVP, **call Santiago at (800) 243-2101**

Food and drinks will be served.

Language Line Services

Tell your doctor or RN Case Manager if English is not the language you speak. They can call an interpreter who speaks your language. For your health, it is vital to make sure you and your doctor understand each other. This service is free to you.

Questions?

Contact Your RN Case Manager
Mon-Fri, 8:30am-5:30pm
Tel: (800) 474-1434

After-Hours Nurse Advice & Urgent Calls
Mon-Fri, 5:30pm-8:30am and 24 hours on Weekends
Tel: (800) 797-1717