



**Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum  
Chronic Diseases Program  
450 Sutter Street, Suite 600  
San Francisco, CA 94108  
www.apiahf.org**

# Diabetes "Wiki" Alert

"Wiki" is the Hawaiian language word for "fast." The intent of these "Wiki" Alerts are to provide brief informational resources about chronic disease issues that impact Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander communities.

**Diabetes is the fifth leading cause of death in Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (AANHPI) between the ages of 45 and 64. Most AANHPIs with diabetes have type 2 diabetes. (The Office of Minority Health)**

**In Guam, 73% of diabetics were Chamorros, although they only represent 43% of population. (AAPI Journal of Health, 1996)**

## November is Diabetes Awareness Month

**Diabetes is an illness in which the body does not produce or properly use insulin.**

**Diabetics have high levels of glucose in their blood system.**

**Diabetes is associated with long-term complications that may affect a person's quality of life. Diabetes is the leading cause of adult blindness, kidney disease, and amputations of the foot or leg due to nerve disease.**

**Type 1 diabetes occurs when the body's immune system attacks and destroys its own insulin-producing beta cells in the pancreas. In order to live, people with type 1 diabetes need daily injections of insulin.**

**Type 2 diabetes results when the body does not make enough insulin or cannot use the insulin it makes effectively.**

## Diabetes Statistics

- **The prevalence of type 2 diabetes is 2 to 3 times higher among Japanese Americans living in Seattle compared with non-Hispanic whites. (National Diabetes Education Program, 2000)**
- **Diabetes rates in Chinese Americans have also been reported as 5 to 7 times the rate seen in China. (Diabetes in America, 1995)**
- **The prevalence is over 2 times higher among Native Hawaiians compared to Caucasian residents in Hawai'i. (The Office of Minority Health, 2007)**
- **Diabetes is the #9 cause of death in Palau. (Ethnicity & Disease, 2005)**
- **Kosrae in FSM also showed very high prevalence of obesity and diabetes due to more sedentary lifestyle and dependence on Western processed food. (Ethnicity & Disease, 2005)**

*From International Diabetes Institute:*

- Today, some 89 million Asians are thought to be diabetic, and four of the five largest diabetic populations are to be found in Asian countries.
- India has an estimated 35 million people with diabetes. China has 23 million, Pakistan 9 million and Japan 7 million.
- Asia's diabetes count is expected to hit 170 million by 2025, with India and China together accounting for almost 100 million victims.
- In Japan, 80% of new cases in children are Type 2, some as young as nine.

*Take these steps to prevent diabetes:*

- Find out if you are at risk. If you are overweight you are at a higher risk for diabetes so talk with your doctor about your risk.
- Stay at a healthy weight.
- Be physically active by walking, dancing the hula, swimming, paddling a canoe, doing tai chi or karate, or any other fun activity for 30 minutes a day.
- Make healthy food choices.
  - Eat more fruits and vegetables. Persimmons and plantains are now in season. A stir fry dish can be healthier if you use low sodium soy sauce.
  - Choose whole grain foods and brown rice instead of white rice.
  - Choose foods that are prepared with less salt and fat instead of eating salt preserved fish and fried foods. Choose lean meats and remove the skin from chicken and turkey.
  - Drink water or skim milk instead of fruit punch, sweet teas and soft drinks.
  - Cut back on high calorie snack foods and desserts, like crackseeds, chips, cookies, and cakes.
- Follow a balanced diet. Control your calories and portions of food, along with limit saturated and trans fats.
- Quit smoking and drinking alcohol.



**Be physically active by taking part in cultural activities.**

**Diet is an important factor in the prevention and management of diabetes.**



**Seafood is nutrient dense with high protein. It is generally low in calories and total fat. The fat that is found in seafood is rich in polyunsaturates and omega-3 fatty acids.**