

COVID-19 and Diabetes

The Role Physicians and Health Care Professionals Play in Prevention

In the current context of COVID 19, accurate diagnosis and treatment of diabetes has become more imperative than ever. While there is not sufficient data to suggest that people with diabetes contract COVID 19 at a higher rate, recent research shows people with diabetes and uncontrolled hyperglycemia are more likely to have serious complications from COVID-19, including longer hospital stays and death.ⁱ

As health care professionals, special attention needs to be placed on supporting patients with diabetes during the COVID-19 pandemic. Among the actions that health care professionals can take are:

- Identifying all patients that might be a risk for or currently dealing with diabetes in your practice and addressing their condition using evidence-based guidelines.
- Updating knowledge about the appropriate ways to treat those with diabetes in the case of COVID-19 infection. The American Diabetes Association has put together information and a video on COVID-19 and diabetes, considerations for health professionals: <https://professional.diabetes.org/content-page/covid-19-and-diabetes-%E2%80%93-considerations-health-care-professionals>
- Ensuring people with diabetes have access and can afford to obtain their medications and whatever they need to treat their diabetes at home so they don't need to go to hospitals for this care.ⁱⁱ
- Getting patients accustomed to telemedicine visits and helping them access and set up the software they need so they don't face a lag in medical attention and follow up.
- Provide patient support for the behavior modifications needed in these unprecedented times of stress which have disrupted routines and may be impacting self-management at home. Help patients establish new routines to help with diabetes self-management and support services.ⁱⁱⁱ
- When people with diabetes are hospitalized with COVID-19, considerations regarding specific hypoglycemic medications during inpatient hospitalizations need to be made, as well as understanding the resources that will be needed to treat patients with chronic health conditions such as diabetes.

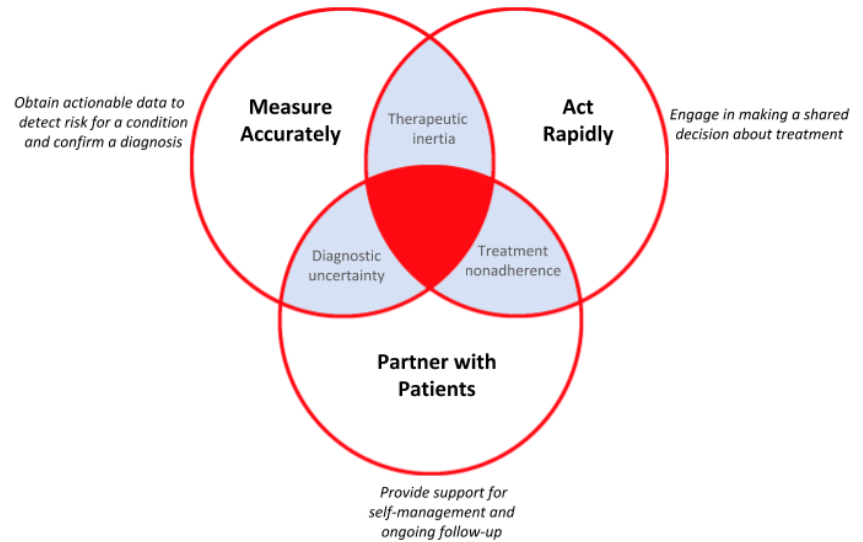
Physicians and health care professionals have the tools needed to reduce their patient's risk of diabetes related complications and to help prevent type 2 diabetes.

Diabetes is on the rise. Among Kentucky adults it has increased to almost 13%. The prevalence in some places, like West Louisville, can be as high as 32%. As of 2018, 11.8% (331,335) Kentucky adults had diagnosed prediabetes.^{iv}

- The American Medical Association and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention developed the **STAT toolkit (Screen/Test/Act Today)** to help health care teams screen, test and refer at risk patients to in-person or online diabetes prevention programs.

Link to STAT: <https://preventdiabetesstat.org/>

- The American Medical Association has also developed the **“M.A.P.” framework** to approach diabetes prevention, which provides a guideline to help physicians accurately diagnose and treat chronic diseases such as diabetes effectively: **Measure accurately, Act rapidly, Partner with patients, families and communities.**



Link to M.A.P: <http://www.amapreventdiabetes.org/clinical-overview>

ⁱ -Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). (2020 April 17). Groups at Higher Risk for Severe Illness. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Available from <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/groups-at-higher-risk.html#diabetes>.

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ⁱⁱ -The Kentucky Prescription Assistance Program (KPAP): <https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/dpqi/hcab/Pages/kpap.aspx>

-New \$35 Co-Pay Now Available through Lilly Insulin Value Program in Response to COVID-19 Crisis in US [news release]. Eli Lilly; April 7, 2020. <https://investor.lilly.com/news-releases/news-release-details/new-35-co-pay-now-available-through-lilly-insulin-value-program>

-Antrim A. New FDA Definition of 'Biologics' Could Increase Access to Affordable Insulin. *Pharmacy Times*, March 4, 2020.

<https://www.pharmacytimes.com/news/new-fda-definition-of-biologics-could-increase-access-to-affordable-insulin>.

-Sanofi Savings Programs for People Living with Diabetes [news release]. Sanofi website. Published April 3, 2020.

ⁱⁱⁱ Kentucky Diabetes Resource Directory: <https://prdweb.chfs.ky.gov/KYDiabetesResources/>

^{iv} Kentucky Department for Public Health and CDC. Kentucky Behavioral Risk Factor Survey Data. 2000, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2017 and 2018.