

Adjust Display: + Larger Font | - Smaller Font



Recent studies have shown that American Indians and Alaska Natives have an elevated risk for developing diabetes. Diabetes is a serious disease that, unless managed and treated properly, may lead to secondary complications including amputation. The following statistics, taken from various sources including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), illustrate the extent and serious nature of this disease and its effect on American Indians/Alaska Natives.

- American Indian/Alaska Native groups have a rate of diabetes 2 to 5 times higher than that of other groups in the United States.¹
- From 1994-2002, the percentage of American Indians/Alaska Natives with diagnosed diabetes rose from 11.5% to 15.3%.²
- A tribe in central Arizona, the Pima Indians, has the world's highest recorded rate of diabetes. About 50% of the members of the tribe between the ages of 30 and 64 have been diagnosed with the disease.³
- In 1997, diabetes accounted for 67% of the total number of lower extremity amputations performed in the United States.⁴
- Amputation rates among American Indians are 3 to 4 times higher than those for the general population.⁵
- It has been estimated that perhaps 50% of lower-extremity amputations could be prevented by improving foot care among individuals with diabetes.⁶

Related Resources

- American Indian Health
www.americanindianhealth.nlm.nih.gov
- *American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Diabetes*
www.diabetes.niddk.nih.gov/dm/pubs/americanindian/index.htm
- National Indian Health Board
www.nihb.org

References

- 1 American Diabetes Association. "Consensus Statement," *Diabetes Care* 23 (3): 381-9.
- 2 "Diabetes Prevalence Among American Indians and Alaska Natives and the Overall Population — United States, 1994-2002," *MMWR Weekly* 52 (30): 702-04. www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5230a3.htm.
- 3 American Diabetes Association. "Consensus Statement," *Diabetes Care* 23 (3): 381-9.
- 4 "Hospital Discharge Rates for Nontraumatic Lower Extremity Amputation by Diabetes Status — U.S., 1997," *MMWR Weekly* 50: 954-8. www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5043a3.htm.
- 5 "Levels of Diabetes-Related Preventive-Care Practices — United States, 1997-99," *MMWR Weekly* 49 (42): 954-8. www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm4942a2.htm.
- 6 Gavin, Laurence A., MD, et al. "Prevention and Treatment of Foot Problems in Diabetes Mellitus: A Comprehensive Program," *Western Journal of Medicine* 158 (1): 47-55.



© Amputee Coalition of America. Local reproduction for use by ACA constituents is permitted as long as this copyright information is included. Organizations or individuals wishing to reprint this article in other publications, including other World Wide Web sites must [contact the](#)

Amputee Coalition of America for permission to do so.