

# Tobacco and Diabetes

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Diabetes is a result of the body not being able to make or use insulin properly. Insulin is a hormone that we need to turn foods into energy for daily life. The exact cause of diabetes is not known, but factors such as genes, obesity and lack of exercise seem to play key roles.<sup>1</sup> Diabetes can't be cured, but it can be controlled with medicine, monitoring, and with healthy eating and exercise habits. If diabetes is poorly controlled or not treated, serious problems can happen that involve the eyes, kidneys, heart and other organs.<sup>2</sup>

Diabetes affects more than 20 million people, or about 7% of us.<sup>3</sup> It is the sixth leading cause of death in the United States.<sup>4</sup> In Utah, about 93,000 people or 4% of us have the disease.<sup>5</sup>

## Tobacco Use

- Smoking can lead to diabetes.<sup>6</sup>
- Tobacco smoke cuts the amount of oxygen reaching the body and increases cholesterol levels in the blood.<sup>7</sup>
- Smoking increases blood pressure<sup>7</sup> and slows blood flow.<sup>8</sup>
- Chemicals in the body that control the kidneys are affected by tobacco use. Smoking triples the chances of getting kidney disease.<sup>8</sup>
- The sugar and harsh chemicals in tobacco eat away at the teeth and gums.<sup>8</sup>

## Effect of Smoking on Diabetes

- Tobacco raises blood sugar levels, making it harder to control diabetes.<sup>7</sup>
- People with diabetes already have a high risk of heart disease. Tobacco use increases the risk of heart attack or stroke even more.<sup>7</sup>
- Diabetes can block the tiny blood vessels in the eyes (retinopathy). Tobacco use can make this problem worse.<sup>8</sup>
- People with diabetes who use tobacco have more chance of getting gum disease and may suffer tooth loss.<sup>8</sup>
- People with diabetes who smoke are more likely to get nerve damage<sup>2</sup> in all parts of the body. This causes numbness and sometimes pain.
- People with diabetes have poor blood flow in their feet and legs. Tobacco use can make foot ulcers, foot infections and blood vessel disease in the legs worse.<sup>8</sup>

## Smokers vs. Nonsmokers

- Smokers are 50% more likely than nonsmokers to get diabetes.<sup>2</sup>
- People with diabetes who smoke have a higher death rate than people with diabetes who don't smoke.<sup>2</sup>
- Medications (ACE Inhibitors) help prevent kidney failure in most diabetics who don't smoke. Medications may not help tobacco users with diabetes.<sup>8</sup>

## For More Information:



Utah Tobacco Prevention  
and Control Program  
1-877-220-3466  
[www.tobaccofreeutah.org](http://www.tobaccofreeutah.org)

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## Helping Tobacco Users Quit

Free, statewide services to help tobacco users quit include:

### Utah Tobacco Quit Line

The Utah Tobacco Quit Line is a free, telephone-based service designed to help people quit tobacco. Be connected with a specially trained Quit Coach who will help you develop a personalized quit plan, and guide you through the quitting process. Call:

English: 1.888.567.TRUTH (8788)

Spanish: 1.877.629.1585

TTY Hearing, Speech Impaired: 1.877.777.6534

For more information about the Utah Tobacco Quit Line, visit

[www.tobaccofreeutah.org/quitline.htm](http://www.tobaccofreeutah.org/quitline.htm)

### Utah QuitNet

Utah QuitNet is a free, internet-based service designed to help individual tobacco users through the quitting process. As a member you'll have access to the world's largest online community of smokers and ex-smokers helping each other to quit and stay quit. For more information visit [www.utahquitnet.com](http://www.utahquitnet.com).

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<sup>1</sup> American Diabetes Association. "All About Diabetes." 26 September 2007. <<http://www.diabetes.org/about-diabetes.jsp>>

<sup>2</sup> The Scoop On Smoking. "Diabetes." The American Council on Science and Health. 26 September 2007. <<http://www.thescooponsmoking.org/xhtml/effects/diabetes.php#top>>

<sup>3</sup> American Diabetes Association. "Total Prevalence of Diabetes & Pre-Diabetes." 26 September 2007. <<http://www.diabetes.org/diabetes-statistics/prevalence.jsp>>

<sup>4</sup> Diabetes Prevention & Control Program. "Basics About Diabetes." Utah Department of Health. 26 September 2007. <<http://health.utah.gov/diabetes/aboutdiabetes/dmbasics.htm>>

<sup>5</sup> Diabetes Prevention & Control Program. "Diabetes in Utah." 2006. Utah Department of Health. 26 September 2007. <[http://health.utah.gov/diabetes/pdf/fctsandfig/diabetesinutah\\_book\\_feb07.pdf](http://health.utah.gov/diabetes/pdf/fctsandfig/diabetesinutah_book_feb07.pdf)>

<sup>6</sup> Action on Smoking and Health. "Factsheet No. 23: Smoking and Diabetes." 15 May 2007. <<http://www.ash.org.uk>>

<sup>7</sup> American Diabetes Association. "Smoking." 26 September 2007. <<http://www.diabetes.org/type-1-diabetes/smoking.jsp>>

<sup>8</sup> Tobacco Prevention and Control Program. "Tobacco and Diabetes." Utah Department of Health. 26 September 2007. <[http://www.tobaccofreeutah.org/tobacco\\_diabetes\\_handout.pdf](http://www.tobaccofreeutah.org/tobacco_diabetes_handout.pdf)>

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