

Diabetes in the News--Know Your Numbers!

Michigan Office of Services to the Aging

Recent studies have confirmed that more than two-thirds of diabetics in America are not controlling their glucose levels effectively and only one-third or so are in good control. Diabetes is a chronic disease that greatly increases risk of other diseases such as cardiovascular disease and PAD or peripheral artery disease. This disease is an indicator that the blood vessels in the legs have been damaged because of the diabetes and it is a leading factor in leg pain and can lead to serious disease. Knowing your glucose numbers, controlling them and getting checked for PAD are three important things you can do today to reduce your risk.

Diabetics over age 50 are now encouraged to be checked for PAD—blood pressure is checked at the ankle and if a reading is obtained that is much lower than in the arm, PAD may be a concern. The reduced blood pressure reading in the ankle indicates that blood flow to the lower legs is being reduced by vessels.

Another important test for glucose control is called the A1C, which allows doctors to see how well levels are being controlled over time. For every point lower on this test, the risk of complications with diabetes is reduced 40%. It is estimated that 13,000 lives could be saved yearly if diabetics took more care with their glucose levels!

Call your physician today! Take the time now to check blood glucose levels and have yourself screened for PAD. If you are not sure about your diet, then ask for a consult with a registered dietitian. Know your numbers and stay in control!