

3.11 Diabetes

To the teacher:

The following Diabetes Fact Sheet was made in response to teacher requests for simple information and teaching materials on diabetes. It is a simple tool to introduce discussion of an important health topic for your learners. It is not meant to give them an in-depth understanding of diabetes. You can tell learners something like:

"I'm going to give you some general information about diabetes, and I'll show you where to find medical information on the Internet. But, I can't answer any specific questions about any health problems that you may have; it's best to see a doctor to discuss your personal health questions."

Some Ideas for Using the Fact Sheet

The fact sheet content is likely interesting and relevant to many learners. Using this content as a springboard for a health lesson, you can incorporate many different language functions and vocabulary and language skill development at different ESOL levels.

- You can go over the information on the fact sheet and the discussion questions that follow it with your class in a health lesson as a prompt for discussion, writing, and/or learner projects. Decide in advance if your learners would be comfortable going over the questions aloud or in writing. If you go over the questions aloud, make sure learners know that sharing personal health information is optional.
- To introduce the **concept of being at high risk** for diabetes, use sentence strips and the Risk Chart handout. Cut out the sentence strips and distribute sets to small groups. Have learners read the strips and separate the strips into two groups: High Risk and Low Risk. Next, have learners write names of the people described on the slips in the appropriate column on the Risk Chart handout. Go over the chart as a whole class. Answers:
 - High risk – Joe, Maria, Ling, Mark
 - Low risk – Mona, Mahmood, Lee
- Learners can follow up class discussion of the fact sheet by exploring web videos and articles listed on the page after the fact sheet.



- The health lesson can be combined with a food lesson. Bring in foods or pictures of foods and talk about which ones would be good for someone with diabetes, which ones wouldn't, and why.
- You could use the fact sheet to go over the basic information with learners to prepare them for a health care guest speaker on diabetes.
- Higher level learners could use the fact sheet as a model to research and put together their own fact sheet on a different health condition. They could present their fact sheets to classmates.
- The flexible format used for the Diabetes Fact Sheet and accompanying activities can be used for other health topics of interest to your learners.

Sources and Links

The information contained in the Diabetes Fact Sheet has been drawn from multiple reliable health education resources on the *Diabetes* pages of the websites MedlinePlus.gov and HealthyRoadsMedia.org. If at a future date you try to access the links in the lesson and they don't work, go to the homepages for these two sites and search for "diabetes." It should be easy to locate the materials through searching within these sites.



Diabetes Fact Sheet

- **Diabetes** is a serious illness in the United States. **Many people** in the U.S. have diabetes. Diabetes is about problems with **how your body uses sugar. A blood test can show if you have diabetes.**
- There are 3 kinds of diabetes:
 - **Type 1** – usually starts as a child
 - **Type 2** – usually starts as an adult
 - **Gestational** – in pregnancy
 - **You can start having diabetes when you are a child OR when you are an adult.**
 - **Many people can prevent diabetes or make it better with a good diet and exercise.**
- MANY Americans are **at risk** for diabetes. These are some groups of people who are at **HIGH RISK**:
 - **Old people**
 - **African Americans, Latino Americans, some Asian Americans**
 - **People who do not exercise much**
 - **People who are overweight**
 - **People who have diabetes in their family**
- What can happen if you don't take care of diabetes?
 - **Very serious problems with your kidneys, nerves, feet, eyes, and heart**
 - **Maybe also problems with your bones, skin, digestion, sexual function, teeth, and hearing**
- What are **treatments** for diabetes?
 - **Eating healthy, low sugar foods**
 - **Exercising**
 - **Checking blood sugar levels**
 - **Diabetes medications** (insulin and others)

Some people do not need medications for their diabetes. For some people, eating better and exercising can control diabetes.



Where can you learn more about diabetes?

- [Video:](#)
- [Video:](#)
- [Collection of articles:](#)
- [Collection of video and audio:](#)



Diabetes Fact Sheet: Sentence Strips

Joe is 68 and white. He is overweight. He doesn't exercise.

Maria is 23 and hispanic. Her mother has diabetes.

Ling is 70 and overweight. Her brother has diabetes.

Mona rides her bike every day. She doesn't eat sweets. She is thin.

Mark is 45. He is African American. He sits all day at work.

Mahmood is 30. He goes to the gym every day. No one in his family has diabetes.

Lee is 25. He is white. He runs three times a week. He eats healthy foods.



Diabetes Fact Sheet: Risk Chart

Write the person's name in the correct column.

High Risk	Low Risk



Diabetes Fact Sheet: Questions

1. Are you in a HIGH RISK group for diabetes? If yes, which group(s)?

2. What do you want your family and friends to know about diabetes?

3. If you do not have diabetes, what can you do to prevent diabetes?

4. If you do have diabetes, what do you do to take care of your diabetes?

5. What else would you like to learn about diabetes?

