

Societal Barometer: Key Findings

A majority of Americans have a high awareness of diabetes and recognize the seriousness of the disease. They generally understand what diabetes is and who it impacts. Nearly a quarter of adults have been told they have diabetes or are at-risk of diabetes. Surprisingly, of adults *who did not have diabetes*, nearly half felt they could be at-risk for diabetes and one-third think they will develop diabetes in their lifetime. While most Americans believe there are things a person can do to prevent diabetes, it is less clear whether they fully understand the connection between maintaining a healthy weight and getting regular physical activity and the prevention of diabetes. There is, however, clear public support for system changes to improve diabetes prevention and treatment.

Key Findings:

An overwhelming majority of Americans believe diabetes is a serious national health issue and feel it directly impacts their lives.

- A majority of Americans consider diabetes to be a serious national health issue (94%), in many cases as serious as or more serious than heart disease (71%) and stroke (69%).
- More than 9 in 10 believe that the number of people with diabetes in the United States is increasing rapidly (93%).
- Half of American adults report feeling affected by diabetes.
- Nearly 2 in 5 (39%) indicate someone in their immediate family has diabetes.
- One in four adults (24%) have either been diagnosed by a physician as having diabetes (9%) or as being at-risk for diabetes (15%).
 - Among African Americans, 18% report having been diagnosed with diabetes by a physician and 24% report being told they are at-risk.
 - Among people of Hispanic decent, 10% report being diagnosed with diabetes and 17% report being told they are at-risk.
- Of those diagnosed *at-risk* of diabetes by a physician, a majority (71%) believe they will develop diabetes (20% very likely; 51% somewhat likely).
- Of adults *who did not have diabetes*, nearly half (47%) felt they could be at-risk for diabetes and 33% believe it is likely they will develop diabetes in their lifetime (5% very likely).
- One in every two adults (48%) strongly believes that having diabetes would dramatically affect their life.

A large majority of the public says there are things a person can do to prevent diabetes — however, there is a lack of specific knowledge about the preventative benefits of healthy eating and physical activity as it relates to weight loss.

- The majority of Americans (83%) believe a person can do things to prevent diabetes.
- Although more than half of adults surveyed (52%) cite weight as a recognized risk factor for diabetes, there is much less recognition that lack of physical activity is also a risk factor (9%) or that nutrition and physical activity are prevention factors.
- On an unaided basis, only 20% reported maintaining a healthy weight or losing weight as a way to prevent diabetes and even fewer (16%) reported exercise for the prevention of diabetes.
- When asked if there is anything people can do to *reduce their risk of serious health problems caused by diabetes*, two-thirds (66%) indicated that a good diet can help, while significantly less (32%) said the same about exercise.

While a significant number of adults have been told to control or lose weight, change their diet and/or increase their physical activity, sizable numbers do not always follow the advice of health care professionals (perhaps not associating these changes with lowering their risk for diabetes or the complications of diabetes).

- More than 40 percent of adults (41%) report being told to control or lose weight by a doctor or other health care professional. Nearly half (49%) have been told to increase their physical activity or exercise.
- 79% report following advice to control or lose weight; 70% report the same for physical activity or exercise.
- One in every two adults (51%) mentions a physician as a source of most of their health information; this jumps to 72% for people with diabetes. The Internet is the second most frequently cited source for health information.

There is strong public support for systems change to improve diabetes prevention and treatment efforts requiring leadership at all levels.

- There is overwhelming public support for school-based programs and policies to benefit children's health:
 - Physical education should be mandatory in all public schools (96% agree; 45% strongly agree)
 - Schools should be required to educate children about healthy lifestyles (94% agree; 40% strongly agree)
 - Schools should be required to educate children on ways they can reduce their risk of diabetes (89% agree; 32% strongly agree)
 - Schools should ban high-calorie sodas and snack foods (81% agree; 34% strongly agree)

- Insurers and employers can help support healthier behavior by offering discounts and incentives:
 - Health insurers should offer discounts to people who lose weight and avoid health problems (85% agree; 30% strongly agree)
 - Employers should offer incentives to employees who engage in healthy behaviors (81% agree; 26% strongly agree)
- Government can do more to allocate federal resources for diabetes education and coordination:
 - Tax dollars should be used to educate the public on preventing diabetes through diet and exercise (77% agree; 21% strongly agree)
 - Federal government should appoint a national diabetes coordinator to coordinate diabetes research, treatment and education (69% agree; 18% strongly agree)

Methodology

Gallup® conducted 2,015 interviews in the United States among the adult general public 18 and over. The study was conducted from June 11 through July 22, 2007. The samples used for this study included a random-digit dial sampling procedure designed to include both listed telephones and unlisted telephones and a nationally representative sample of U.S. adults residing in households with landline telephones. The sampling frame incorporated an over-sampling of African Americans and English-speaking Hispanics. This over-sampling allowed for sub-group analysis of the findings among populations with above-average risk for diabetes. Each sample was weighted separately by the following variables: race/ethnicity, region, gender, age and education. The final data set was statistically adjusted (weighted) to account for the over-sampling in order to bring the demographic groups back into their correct proportion according to the most recent CPS (Current Population Survey) data. The final results are representative of all adults age 18 and over residing in households with telephones.

The margin of error is (+/-) 3 percentage points.

KRC Research performed advanced statistical analysis using the Gallup® dataset. KRC calculated knowledge and vulnerability indices to measure consumer knowledge and behavior, used K-means clustering and latent class segmentation algorithms to segment respondents into homogenous groups based on their attitudes towards diabetes, and conducted advanced multivariate analyses, including driver analyses (linear regression and discriminant analysis) to determine correlates and predictors of consumer knowledge and behavior.

Research commissioned by Novo Nordisk through its Changing Diabetes® leadership initiative.

Novo Nordisk is dedicated to changing diabetes by acting as a partner and catalyst for change in its mission to improve the way diabetes is managed and, ultimately, defeated.