

PREDIABETES AND DIABETES IN THE WORKPLACE:

How employers can help stop an epidemic

The costs

In the average workplace one out of every three employees may have prediabetes,¹ many without realizing it. If left untreated, prediabetes can progress to type 2 diabetes.

Those with diabetes typically have medical expenses that are 2.3 times higher than those without the condition. Diabetes costs the United States more than \$245 billion in 2012,² including:

- \$176 billion in direct medical costs²
- \$69 billion in reduced productivity²

Health care spending is roughly \$2,700 more per year for employees who transition from prediabetes to type 2 diabetes.³

The complications

Prediabetes is a common precursor to type 2 diabetes. It occurs when blood sugar levels are higher than normal but not high enough yet to be diagnosed as type 2 diabetes. Type 2 diabetes is a chronic condition that affects the way the body processes sugar. By preventing type 2 diabetes, employers can help their employees avoid problems such as:



VISION PROBLEMS
OR BLINDNESS



NERVE DAMAGE,
POOR CIRCULATION
& AMPUTATION



KIDNEY DAMAGE, DIALYSIS
OR TRANSPLANT



HEART DISEASE, HEART
ATTACK OR STROKE

The solution

Employers can make a big difference.

Employees with prediabetes can reduce their risk by as much as 58 percent if they participate in a CDC-recognized lifestyle change program offered by their employer as a covered benefit.⁴

The National Diabetes Prevention Program: How it works

The [National DPP](#) lifestyle change program lasts for approximately one year. Employers have many options for program delivery—from hosting on-site meetings during lunch, to offering online courses to be completed on the employee's own time, to scheduling group sessions at local, off-site venues. Lifestyle coaching can be outsourced or internal team members can be trained to deliver programs.

Employers can also name and promote the program as they wish. The goals of this program may closely align with many other wellness metrics. Some employers have found that promoting the program under a broader “Healthy Lifestyle” title garners more team interest than something diabetes-specific while still achieving underlying diabetes prevention goals.

Visit <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/prevention/lifestyle-program/deliverers/eligibility.html> to see who qualifies for a program.

A CDC-recognized organization offering the National DPP lifestyle change program can help you set up screening processes at your workplace to identify eligible employees. Participants in a CDC-recognized lifestyle change program receive intensive lifestyle coaching to help with key topics such as:

- Losing 5–7% of body weight
- Eating healthy
- Increasing physical activity
- Managing stress and triggers

Employers can promote better health and save money

The National DPP lifestyle change program costs an average of \$450 per participant, a fraction of the amount employers can expect to pay if an employee develops type 2 diabetes.

For example, an employer with:

- 250 employees could save up to \$8,759 over three years
- 1,000 employees could save up to \$35,037 over three years
- 2,600 employees could save up to \$91,096 over three years

AMA and CDC have developed cost calculator tools to help employers, insurers, and other stakeholders estimate potential return on investment (ROI) and other cost and health outcome measures associated with offering the National DPP lifestyle change program to employees, beneficiaries, or members.

Use the AMA's Diabetes Prevention Cost Savings Calculator at <https://ama-roi-calculator.appspot.com> or the CDC's Diabetes Prevention Impact Toolkit at <https://nccd.cdc.gov/Toolkit/DiabetesImpact>.

Sources

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4. Diabetes Prevention Program Research Group. Reduction in the incidence of type 2 diabetes with lifestyle intervention or metformin. *N Engl J Med*. 2002;346(6):393–403.

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NEXT STEPS:

- Review the **assessment tool** to estimate the prevalence of prediabetes in your organization.
- Use the **online calculators** to determine potential savings.
- Present the white paper and senior leadership slides to **make a business case**.
- Contact your insurer to discuss making the National DPP a covered benefit.
- Visit the National DPP website to identify program options in your area.