November 20, 2026

THE PATIENTPRESCRIPTION

Your Health Begins Here



Quality Spotlight - Diabetes Management

HopeHealth's quality focus for November is diabetes management. This clinical focus includes measures like A1c tests, KED measure (kidney health evaluation for patients with diabetes), diabetic eye exams, and diabetic foot exams.

Keep reading to learn about the importance of diabetes detection and treatment. **Click here** for more information about The Diabetes Institute.

The Hidden Epidemic: Many Americans Unaware of Having Diabetes or Prediabetes

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Diabetes Often Goes Undetected
Diabetes and prediabetes have become increasingly common over the past several decades, making diabetes one of the nation's most significant and often overlooked public health concerns.

Nearly 12% of Americans have diabetes, and an estimated 30% do not know they have it. Prediabetes, a condition in which blood sugar levels are higher than normal but not yet in the diabetic range, affects approximately one in three adults. Of those, an estimated 80-90% are unaware they have the condition.

Why Early Detection Matters
Prediabetes and Type 2 diabetes typically develop slowly, often without noticeable symptoms. As a result, many individuals are not diagnosed until complications have already begun. Fortunately, routine annual wellness visits and blood sugar screenings can identify these conditions early, allowing treatment to begin before long-term damage occurs.

What is Diabetes?
Diabetes is a condition in which the body cannot properly regulate glucose (blood sugar), its primary source of energy. After carbohydrates such as bread, pasta, rice, fruit, milk, sweets, and sugary drinks are digested, they are broken down into glucose and absorbed into the bloodstream.

The hormone insulin allows glucose to move from the bloodstream into the body's cells, where it is used for energy. In people with prediabetes and Type 2 diabetes, the body either does not produce enough insulin or cannot use it effectively. As a result, glucose builds up in the bloodstream instead of being used by the body's cells.

Over time, consistently elevated blood sugar can damage blood vessels and nerves, increasing the risk of heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, vision loss, nerve damage, amputations, and even dementia. Since this damage often occurs silently, many people are unaware that complications are developing until significant harm has already occurred. Maintaining healthy blood sugar levels can reduce these risks while improving energy, overall health, and quality of life.

The Three Main Types of Diabetes: Prediabetes, Type 2, and Type 1
Prediabetes occurs when blood sugar levels are higher than normal and is a precursor to diabetes. Most people with prediabetes have no symptoms. However, possible signs may include skin tags, darkened skin in areas such as the armpits or neck, and symptoms similar to those of diabetes.

Type 2 diabetes accounts for approximately 90-95% of all diabetic cases. Risk factors include a family history of diabetes, being overweight or obese, physical inactivity, being age 45 or older, high blood pressure, prediabetes, and certain racial or ethnic backgrounds, including African Americans, who have a higher risk of developing the disease.

Type 1 diabetes is an autoimmune disease in which the immune system attacks and destroys the insulin-producing cells of the pancreas. The onset of symptoms usually develops quickly. Although type 1 diabetes can develop at any age, it commonly occurs in children, teens, and young adults. Risk factors include genetics and certain environmental triggers. There is currently no known way to prevent or cure Type 1 diabetes.

Some common signs of high blood sugar levels, present with both type 1 and type 2 diabetes, include excessive urination and thirst, weight loss, fatigue, numbness in the hands and feet, and blurry vision.

Why Don't People Get Screened?
Preventive health screenings save lives, yet millions of recommended screenings go uncompleted. Common barriers include cost, lack of symptoms, transportation challenges, limited access to a primary care provider, and mistrust of the health care system. Others assume feeling tired or unwell is simply a normal part of aging, or avoid testing because they fear receiving a diagnosis.

How Is Diabetes Diagnosed?
Two simple blood tests can help confirm a diagnosis of prediabetes or diabetes:

Fasting Blood Glucose Test
Blood glucose testing is a standard part of annual bloodwork, where prediabetes or diabetes may be diagnosed. Fasting glucose measures blood sugar at a single point in time after you have fasted for at least eight hours. Less than 100 mg/dL is normal. The prediabetes range is 100-125 mg/dL. Diabetes is confirmed when the level is 126 mg/ml or higher on two separate tests.

Hemoglobin A1C Testing
The A1C test measures average blood sugar levels over the previous two to three months and is used both to diagnose and monitor diabetes. A level of 4.7-5.6 is normal, 5.7-6.4 is the prediabetes range, and 6.5 and above is the diabetes range.

Who Should Be Screened?
The American Diabetes Association recommends that all adults age 35 and older be routinely screened for diabetes. Testing is recommended for others at higher risk, including those under 35 who are overweight or obese and have one or more additional risk factors, children who are overweight or obese with family history or risk factors, individuals who are already diagnosed with prediabetes, and women who had diabetes while pregnant, known as gestational diabetes.

Managing Diabetes
Fortunately, prediabetes can often be reversed, reducing the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes. Treatment for prediabetes and Type 2 diabetes focuses on maintaining healthy blood sugar levels through lifestyle changes, regular monitoring, and medications when appropriate. Healthy eating,

regular physical activity, adequate sleep, stress management, and maintaining a healthy weight all play important roles in preventing complications and improving long-term health. Even small lifestyle changes can significantly reduce the risk of developing diabetes or help improve blood sugar control in those already living with diabetes.

Take Charge of Your Health
If you are experiencing any symptoms of prediabetes or diabetes, schedule an appointment with your health care provider. If you do not have a primary care provider, taking charge of your health and establishing care with a provider is a great first step toward protecting your health.

The Diabetes Institute at HopeHealth provides comprehensive diabetes care through a multidisciplinary team of endocrinologists, nurses, dietitians, and support staff. Classes for the National Diabetes Prevention Program are also offered through The Diabetes Institute. For more information, visit hope-health.org/services/the-diabetes-institute/.
Regular wellness visits and recommended health screenings remain among the most effective tools for preventing chronic diseases like diabetes. Early detection allows individuals to slow disease progression, reduce complications, and improve their quality of life.

Chief Medical Officer Receives SC Office of Rural Health Award

Congratulations to Dr. Ed Behling, recipient of the 2026 Rural Practitioner of the Year award from the SC Office of Rural Health! This award recognizes his service and commitment to improving primary health care in his rural community. **Click here** to watch a video with more information about Dr. Behling and his work.



Holiday Closure Reminder



HopeHealth clinical sites will be closed on Thursday, November 26, and Friday, November 27, to celebrate Thanksgiving.

HopeHealth in Hemingway will be closed the full week of Thanksgiving (November 23-27).

The HopeHealth Pharmacy will be closed on Thursday, November 26, and open from 9am-1pm on Friday, November 27.

Upcoming AIDS Awareness Events

AIDSWalk



World AIDS Day of Remembrance

HOPEHEALTH
YOUR HEALTH BEGINS HERE



12.1.26

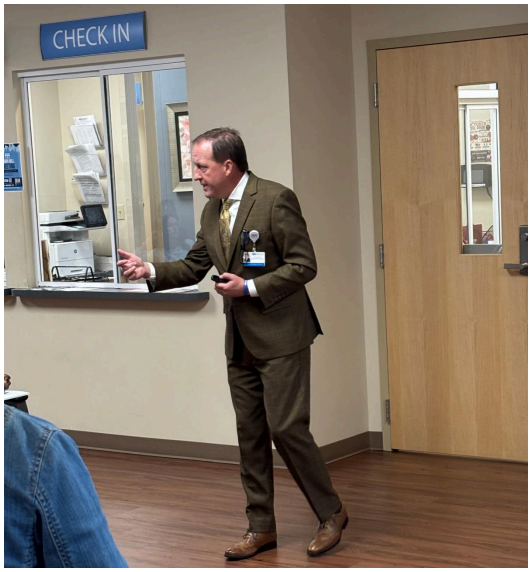
12 - 3 pm

Free HIV testing | Giveaways | Light Refreshments

Orangeburg Conference Center
1643 Russell St. Orangeburg, SC 29115

Not black tie, wear your best red and black attire

Orangeburg Town Hall Recap







Connecting with our community is at the heart of what we do! HopeHealth CEO Carl Humphries recently joined patients and community partners for a town hall at HopeHealth in Orangeburg. The gathering provided an opportunity to share updates, hear valuable feedback, and strengthen the relationships that help us better serve Orangeburg County. Thank you to everyone who joined us and shared their perspectives!

Recipe Spotlight

Breakfast Egg Casserole

This easy casserole dish is high in protein and a great option for holiday breakfast, brunch, or any time of year! Serves 6.

Ingredients:

- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 cup diced bell pepper (green, yellow, red, or orange)
- 1 cup diced onion (white, yellow, or purple)
- 3 cups baby spinach, roughly chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced

- 12 eggs
- 2 cups cottage cheese
- 1 Tbsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp. garlic powder
- 1 tsp. paprika
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 ½ cups grated sharp cheddar cheese



Directions:

- Preheat oven to 350F and oil a 9x13 baking dish.
- Heat oil in a skillet over medium heat. Add peppers and onions and cook until soft, about 3-5 minutes.
- Stir in spinach and garlic, and cook until spinach is wilted, about 1-2 minutes. Remove from heat and cool slightly.
- In a large bowl, whisk together eggs, cottage cheese, Dijon mustard, garlic powder, paprika, salt, and pepper until well blended.
- Stir in the vegetables and ½ of the shredded cheese.
- Pour the mixture into the casserole dish and top with the remaining shredded cheese.
- Cover with aluminum foil and bake for 25 minutes. Remove the foil and cook for another 25-30 minutes or until the top is golden and a knife or toothpick comes out clean.
- Cool for at least 5 minutes, preferably 10-15, before cutting and serving.

Tips:

- Feel free to switch it up and use any veggies you like. Some ideas include mushrooms, tomatoes, or broccoli.
- Leftovers are good for up to 4 days in the refrigerator.

*Visit **hope-health.org/events** to learn about and sign up for free community classes offered by HopeHealth! Topics range from healthy cooking to diabetes management, prioritizing movement, carbohydrate counting, and more.*

How satisfied were you with the content of this email?

5 - Very Satisfied

4 - Satisfied

3 - Neutral

2 - Dissatisfied

1 - Very Dissatisfied

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hope-health.org

Support Community Health Centers at hcadvocacy.org. Become an advocate today!

HopeHealth | 360 N. Irby St. | Florence, SC 29501 US

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