

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Take it. Share it. Step Out.**

*Americans are urged to take the Diabetes Risk Test on American Diabetes Association Alert Day<sup>®</sup> and to share it with everyone they care about to find out if they are at risk for developing type 2 diabetes.*

**RICHMOND, VA (March 10, 2015)** – Tuesday, March 24, 2015, is the annual American Diabetes Association Alert Day, a “wake-up call” asking the American public to take the Diabetes Risk Test to find out if they are at risk for developing type 2 diabetes. During its 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, the Association is even more committed this year to making sure the public is aware of their risk for type 2 diabetes. The campaign will run through April 21.

On Alert Day, Americans will be urged to take the risk test at [diabetes.org/takeitshareit](http://diabetes.org/takeitshareit) and start living a healthy and active lifestyle. One way to do this is by joining or starting a team for one of the Association’s nationwide Step Out: Walk to Stop Diabetes<sup>®</sup> events, which is scheduled for Richmond on Saturday, October 17 at the Bon Secours Washington Redskins Training Center. The Central Virginia office, with funding from Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation, has also created a free Diabetes Education Program in 2015 to recruit 500 participants in health and wellness workshops in an effort to prevent and better manage diabetes.

“I am delighted that the Mayor’s Healthy Richmond Campaign is joining efforts with the American Diabetes Association to encourage residents to take the Diabetes Risk Test”, said Mayor Dwight C. Jones. “Good health not only makes for a more fulfilling and enjoyable life, but the adoption of healthy lifestyle behaviors matched with proper healthcare can prevent many diseases and conditions like diabetes that impact the physical and economic well-being of our entire community.”

Diabetes is a serious disease that strikes nearly 30 million Americans including nearly 900,000 in Virginia. A quarter of those affected by diabetes are not aware that they have the disease. Recent estimates project that as many as one in three American adults will have diabetes in 2050 unless steps are taken to Stop Diabetes<sup>®</sup>.

An additional 86 million, or one in three American adults, have prediabetes, which means that their blood glucose (sugar) is higher than normal, but not high enough to be classified as diabetes. Early intervention via lifestyle changes such as weight loss and increased physical activity can help delay or prevent the onset of type 2 diabetes. The American Diabetes Association is fighting to Stop Diabetes and takes the opportunity of Alert Day to help identify those who are undiagnosed and those at risk for type 2 diabetes, by educating people about diabetes risk factors and warning signs.

Unfortunately, diagnosis often comes seven to 10 years after the onset of the disease, after disabling and even deadly complications have had time to develop. Therefore, early diagnosis is critical to successful treatment and delaying or preventing some of its complications such as heart disease, blindness, kidney disease, stroke, amputation and death.

“Studies have shown that type 2 diabetes can be prevented or delayed by losing just 7 percent of body weight (that is 15 pounds if you weigh 200) through regular physical activity (30 minutes a day, five days a week) and healthy eating,” said Rick Blackwell, chair of the Association’s Central Virginia Community Leadership Board. “The American Diabetes Association hopes that this Alert Day will encourage people to take the Diabetes Risk Test and share it with their loved ones. By understanding your risk, you can take the necessary steps to help prevent the onset of type 2 diabetes.”

To help people better recognize their own risk for type 2 diabetes, the American Diabetes Association provides the Diabetes Risk Test, asking users to answer simple questions about weight, age, family history and other potential risks for prediabetes or type 2 diabetes. Preventative tips are provided for everyone who takes the test, including encouraging those at high risk to talk with their health care provider.

You can be part of the movement to Stop Diabetes and get your free Diabetes Risk Test (English or Spanish), as well as information about diabetes and joining or starting a team for a Step Out event by visiting at [diabetes.org/alert](http://diabetes.org/alert) or by calling 1-800-DIABETES (1-800-342-2383). Walgreens is supporting the American Diabetes Association Alert Day efforts and you can ask your local Walgreens pharmacist for a copy of the Diabetes Risk Test. Although the campaign starts on March 24 and continues through April 21, the Diabetes Risk Test is available year-round.

The primary risk factors for type 2 diabetes are being overweight, sedentary, over the age of 45 and having a family history of diabetes. African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, Native Americans, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are at an increased risk for developing the disease.

### **About the American Diabetes Association**

The American Diabetes Association is leading the fight to Stop Diabetes<sup>®</sup> and its deadly consequences and fighting for those affected by diabetes. The Association funds research to prevent, cure and manage diabetes; delivers services to hundreds of communities; provides objective and credible information; and gives voice to those denied their rights because of diabetes. Founded in 1940, our mission is to prevent and cure diabetes and to improve the lives of all people affected by diabetes. For more information please call the American Diabetes Association at 1-800-DIABETES (1-800-342-2383) or visit [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org). Information from both these sources is available in English and Spanish. For more information about local programs and events please call the Central Virginia office at 804-225-8038.

### **About the Mayor's Healthy Richmond Campaign**

The Mayor's Healthy Richmond Campaign grew out of a series of recommendations from the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Commission on Health Policy. Launched in 2012, the Mayor's Healthy Richmond Campaign promotes healthy lifestyle behaviors and participates in various initiatives to improve the health of Richmond's residents. Through vital partnerships, the Campaign continues to identify ways to ensure that residents have access to health promotion and education activities that support healthy life choices and outcomes. For more information please contact the City of Richmond's Office of the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for Human Services at 804-646-0586 or visit [www.richmondgov.com](http://www.richmondgov.com).

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