

Diabetes Programs Teach HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

Challenges

- Approximately 2.5 million people in Texas (11% of the population) have diabetes. Among them, an estimated 621,000 are undiagnosed, which significantly increases their health risks.
- Another 7.1 million people have prediabetes, with blood glucose levels above the normal range but not yet high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes.
- The annual cost of diabetes and prediabetes in Texas is estimated at \$25.6 billion.
- Higher diabetes incidence rates and increased costs are expected in the future due to a variety of factors, including demographic changes and growth in the population of those who are at a higher risk for the disease.

AgriLife Extension Response

Diabetes is not curable, but it is manageable. People can learn skills to manage their diabetes and reduce the risk of developing it through better nutrition, exercise and monitoring blood-sugar levels when education is readily available.

- **Do Well, Be Well with Diabetes** is a low-cost class series covering nine self-care and nutrition topics in five sessions.
- **¡Sí, Yo Puedo Controlar Mi Diabetes!** addresses the gap in health programming in type 2 diabetes self-management education for Texas Hispanics/Latinos.
- **Cooking Well with Diabetes** is a cooking class designed to help people with diabetes and anyone that prepares food for them, and includes basic nutrition education.
- **Wisdom, Power, Control** addresses the need for an evidence-based, culturally relevant type 2 diabetes self-management education (DSME) program to help African Americans.
- Through **Healthy South Texas**, AgriLife Extension is working to reduce the highest impact diseases and their consequences throughout a 27-county region in South Texas. The goal is to focus on prevention by engaging families and communities, promoting healthy behaviors, encouraging preventive care and improving disease outcomes.
- All diabetes programs engage dietitians, diabetes educators, medical professionals, and Extension educators to reinforce practical nutrition concepts for people with diabetes.
- In 2025, diabetes education programs reached more than **9,300 educational** and other contacts.

Economic Impacts

From a broader perspective, these programs reach communities and individuals lacking access to diabetes education, enabling a better quality of life and improved productivity for people with diabetes.

- For people without diabetes, average annual health care costs range from \$4,861 to \$7,714. For those with diabetes, that amount soars to an average of \$19,736 per year.
- AgriLife Extension diabetes education programs led to estimated lifetime health care cost savings and improved productivity of **\$41.3 million** for approximately **1,203 participants** in 2025.
- Proper self-management of the disease enables people with diabetes to reduce their health care costs to levels closer to the non-diabetes level.

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