

\$3M Grant to Reduce Diabetes in Latino Community

Latinos face higher rates of type 2 diabetes and are more likely to develop diabetes at a younger age compared with other racial groups.

November 3, 2023 By Laura Schmidt

November marks the start of National Diabetes Awareness Month. To address and prevent [diabetes](#) in the Latino community, the United Health Foundation announced a three-year \$3 million grant partnership with the Hispanic Federation, a nonprofit dedicated to empowering the Latino community.

The partnership will fund a program that will support Latinos in Texas and Georgia, according to a [United Health Foundation news release](#), by providing culturally relevant resources encouraging Latino families to exercise regularly, get routine health screenings and eat healthy diets.

Overall, adults in the United States have a 40% chance of developing type 2 diabetes, according to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC). In Latino adults, that chance increases to more than 50%. What's more, Latinos are more likely to develop diabetes at a younger age as [prediabetes](#), or blood sugar levels that are higher than average but not high enough to be classified as [type 2 diabetes](#).

"We are honored to announce this grant partnership with Hispanic Federation, especially during National Diabetes Month—a time to bring attention to this life-altering chronic condition. This partnership aligns with our organization's commitment to advancing health equity and building healthier communities by supporting programs to improve [access to care](#) and address key determinants of health," said senior chief medical officer at UnitedHealthcare Mayrene Hernandez.

The grant partnership follows the success of a five-year pilot program in Florida led by the Hispanic Federation. The program connected participants with a lifestyle coach for one-on-one sessions to answer questions and receive advice about exercise. Maintaining a healthy lifestyle through exercise and diet have been proved to reduce a person's risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

"This funding is going toward preventative diabetes programming that could ultimately save the lives of thousands of Latino adults and children," said Hispanic Federation president and CEO Frankie Miranda. "Working collaboratively with the United Health Foundation, we will empower our

community with culturally and linguistically competent information while also expanding access to health care resources that prevent the onset of diabetes and improve the overall health of Latinos.”

“Many Latino families still struggle to access quality and affordable health care, which is why we’re committed to breaking barriers to health care and helping Latinos lead healthier and longer lives,” Miranda added.

To learn more, click [#Diabetes](#) or read Tu Salud’s [Health Basics on Diabetes](#). It reads in part:

Who gets diabetes?

In general, type 1 diabetes occurs most often in kids, but the disease can happen at any age. Type 1 diabetes is also more common among whites than nonwhites. In contrast, type 2 diabetes occurs more often in older people. It is often accompanied by abdominal fat accumulation, high blood pressure and abnormal blood fat levels (collectively known as metabolic syndrome). Type 2 diabetes is more common among African Americans, Latinos, American Indians and some Asian Americans as well as Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders.

Are there different types of diabetes?

There are three main types of diabetes: type 1, type 2 and gestational diabetes. In type 1 diabetes, the body doesn’t make insulin due to destruction of insulin-producing cells in the pancreas. It typically arises during childhood.

Type 2 diabetes, the most common form of the disease, usually arises later in life. While the body still produces some insulin, cells are unable to use it for energy, a condition known as insulin resistance.

Gestational diabetes affects women during pregnancy, usually around their 24th week.

What are the risk factors for diabetes?

The main risk factor for type 1 diabetes is having family members who have the disease. According to the American Diabetes Association, anyone whose mother, father, sister or brother had type 1 diabetes should get screened for the disease. In addition, you’re at risk for type 1 diabetes if you have a history of injury or disease involving the pancreas. Type 1 diabetes may develop after a bacterial or viral infection.

The most common risk factors for developing type 2 diabetes include being overweight or obesity and older age 45 as well as having high blood pressure, a sedentary lifestyle, polycystic ovary syndrome, a history of diabetes during pregnancy or family members who have the disease.