

# University of Arizona Works to Improve Diabetes Research in Latinos

Researchers will use a Wellness Bank to gather information about lifestyle and eating habits, blood samples and more.

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According to a [University of Arizona Health Sciences news release](#), the university's Center for Disparities in Diabetes, Obesity and Metabolism is working to improve research on [diabetes](#) among Latinos.

Latinos have a higher risk of developing [type 2 diabetes](#) (the most common form of the disease) compared with other racial groups. Latinos are also more likely to develop [prediabetes](#), or higher than average blood sugar levels, at a younger age.

Researchers will use a Wellness Bank to collect samples of blood, DNA specimens and data from Latino patients and their families and share the information with academic researchers and the community.

At no cost to them, participants will be able to access their health information from the Wellness Bank in order to make lifestyle changes to reduce their risk of developing diabetes or other diseases.

"This partnership allows research to be done in an ethical way so that participants can use the information to improve their health," said Lisa Soltani, MD, MPH, medical director for internal medicine at El Rio Health, one of two federally qualified health centers that partners with the Wellness Bank, in the news release. "I know many of my patients are also driven to participate because it's a way they can help advance scientific knowledge and understanding that could one day benefit them, their families and their community."

In 2021, approximately 38.4 million Americans , or 11.6% of the U.S. population, had diabetes, according to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).

“Participants get all of their lab tests for free, including things like their dietary sugar control, cholesterol control, kidney function, liver function and electrolyte levels,” said Soltani. “I review each of these lab tests, and it is not infrequent that I find that they do have diabetes or out-of-control blood pressure or kidney failure. This partnership allows us to immediately follow up with them.”

Researchers will be able to access the Wellness Bank to study participant blood samples and gather information about lifestyle and eating habits. The data will be used to study a potential link between mental health and diabetes, explore diet interventions for food insecure adults and more.

To read more, click [#Diabetes](#). There, you’ll find headlines such as “[U.S. Pharmacy Closures Impact Latino and Black Neighborhoods](#),” “[High Price of Popular Diabetes Drugs Deprives Low-Income People of Effective Treatment](#)” and “[Avocados Linked to Lower Diabetes Risk in Mexican Women](#).”