

Diabetes awareness urged

Ken Selzer, CPA, Kansas Commissioner of Insurance, is urging Kansans to increase their awareness of diabetes and its potential management for healthier lives.

“I urge all Kansans during National Diabetes Month in November to increase their knowledge of diabetes and the ways that it can be managed to reduce the negative impact on a person’s life,” Commissioner Selzer said. “Watching for the signs, conferring with your medical provider and engaging in a healthy lifestyle could contribute to reduced risks and costs of this disease.”

According to the American Diabetes Association, a total of 30.3 million American adults have diabetes, with 7.2 million of those undiagnosed.

In 2015, the association said, 84.1 million Americans age 18 and older had prediabetes, which is a warning sign that their blood glucose level (blood sugar level) is higher than normal, but not high enough to be considered diabetes.

Other warning signals of potential diabetic problems include increased thirst, increased hunger, dry mouth, frequent urination or urinary infections, unexplained weight loss, fatigue, blurred vision and headaches. Left unchecked, diabetes can lead to increased risk of heart disease, stroke, eye problems and blindness, kidney disease and leg or foot amputations, medical experts say. “With the onset of those warning signs, Kansans would be wise to seek counsel from their medical providers,” Commissioner Selzer said. “Medical experts say diabetes can be a manageable condition with proper medication, diet and exercise. However, ignoring the warning signs could put people at greater risk of deteriorating health and financial hardships down the road.”

Nine out of 10 people with diabetes have Type 2 diabetes, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. With Type 2 diabetes, a person’s body cannot use its own insulin well and cannot keep blood sugar at normal levels. With Type 1 diabetes, a person’s body does not make any insulin and has to receive injections every day. For more diabetes information, go to www.diabetes.org, the website of the American Diabetes Association.