Diabetes Doesn't Doom Seniors to Disability

Study found increase in 'good' years of life in recent decades

(HealthDay News) -- American seniors with diabetes are starting to live longer without disabilities, a new study finds. Researchers found that adults with either type 1 or type 2 diabetes who were born in the 1940s generally became disabled at an older age than those born in the 1930s. Still, the study also found that after age 50, those with either type 1 or type 2 diabetes had a shorter life expectancy before age 70 and more years of living with disability than those without diabetes.

"We have seen an increase in the length of good disability-free years of life in older Americans aged 50 to 70, both with and without diabetes," said study author Dr. Barbara Bardenheier, from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"Our findings suggest that efforts to promote healthy lifestyles, advancements in the management of diabetes and other chronic conditions such as heart disease, and the increasing popularity of procedures such as hip and knee replacements have been successful in reducing the number of years with disability into later years," she said.

The chances of developing type 2 diabetes are strongly connected to lifestyle. Smoking, an unhealthy diet, alcohol, and physical inactivity can all take their toll," said co-author Dr. Edward Gregg, also of the CDC.

"Ultimately, prevention [of diabetes] will play an important role in achieving more years of healthy life - free of disability," Gregg said.
Vaccines Save Lives

Each year in the United States, about 18,000 adults 65 years or older die and thousands more end up in the hospital because of infections caused by pneumococcal bacteria. Since the 1980s, older adults have been recommended to get the pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine (PPSV23, Pneumovax® 23) which protects against blood and certain other pneumococcal infections. CDC now recommends that adults 65 years or older also receive the pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV13, Prevnar-13®), which provides added protection against pneumonia caused by pneumococcal bacteria. Getting both vaccines offers the best protection we have available against pneumococcal disease.

Pneumococcal disease is an infection caused by Streptococcus pneumoniae bacteria. Pneumococcal bacteria spread from person-to-person through coughing and sneezing. People sometimes have the bacteria in their nose and throat without feeling sick, but can still spread it to other people. When pneumococcal bacteria spread from the nose and throat to ears or sinuses, it generally causes mild illness. When the bacteria spread into other parts of the body, it leads to severe health problems such as infections of the lungs (pneumonia), blood (bacteremia), and lining of the brain and spinal cord (meningitis). These illnesses can lead to disability like deafness, brain damage, or loss of arms or legs. These illnesses can also be life threatening.

Thousands of older adults die and many more are hospitalized from pneumococcal disease every year, but many adults aren’t aware that there are vaccines that can prevent it,” said Dr. Anne Schuchat, assistant surgeon general and director of CDC’s National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases. “A lot of adults get their flu vaccine..., which is a great time to get pneumococcal and other vaccines as well.”

Pneumococcal vaccines may be available at private doctor offices, public or community health clinics, or pharmacies. Check with your doctor or pharmacist or use the http://vaccine.healthmap.org to help find places that provide pneumococcal vaccines near you.

Medicare Part B covers the cost of two recommended doses of pneumococcal vaccine (when administered at least 12 months apart). Talk to your healthcare professional to make sure you are up-to-date on flu and pneumococcal vaccination, as well as other vaccines that may be recommended for you based on your age, health condition, job, lifestyle, or other factors.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT:

The CDC Website at: www.cdc.gov/features/adult-pneumococcal/
Healthy Eating for People Over 65

Making healthy food choices is a smart thing to do—no matter how old you are! Your body changes through your 60s, 70s, 80s, and beyond. Food provides nutrients you need as you age. Use these tips to choose foods for better health at each stage of life.

1. **Drink plenty of liquids**
   With age, you may lose some of your sense of thirst. Drink water often. Low-fat or fat-free milk or 100% juice also helps you stay hydrated. Limit beverages that have lots of added sugars or salt. Learn which liquids are better choices.

2. **Make eating a social event**
   Meals are more enjoyable when you eat with others. Invite a friend to join you or take part in a potluck at least twice a week. A senior center or place of worship may offer meals that are shared with others. There are many ways to make mealtimes pleasing.

3. **Plan healthy meals**
   Find trusted nutrition information from ChooseMyPlate.gov and the National Institute on Aging. Get advice on what to eat, how much to eat, and which foods to choose, all based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Find sensible, flexible ways to choose and prepare tasty meals so you can eat foods you need.

4. **Know how much to eat**
   Learn to recognize how much to eat so you can control portion size. ChooseMyPlate.gov has a “SuperTracker” tool, which shows amounts of food you need. When eating out, pack part of your meal to eat later. One restaurant dish might be enough for two meals or more.

5. **Vary your vegetables**
   Include a variety of different colored vegetables to brighten your plate. Most vegetables are a low-calorie source of nutrients. Vegetables are also a good source of fiber.

6. **Eat for your teeth & gums**
   Many people find that their teeth and gums change as they age. People with dental problems sometimes find it hard to chew fruits, vegetables, or meats. Don’t miss out on needed nutrients! Eating softer foods can help. Try cooked or canned foods like unsweetened fruit, low-sodium soups, or canned tuna.

7. **Use herbs and spices**
   Foods may seem to lose their flavor as you age. If favorite dishes taste different, it may not be the cook! Maybe your sense of smell, sense of taste, or both have changed. Medicines may also change how foods taste. Add flavor to your meals with herbs and spices.

8. **Keep food safe**
   Don’t take a chance with your health. A food-related illness can be life threatening for an older person. Throw out food that might not be safe. Avoid certain foods that are always risky for an older person, such as unpasteurized dairy foods. Other foods can be harmful to you when they are raw or undercooked, such as eggs, sprouts, fish, shellfish, meat, or poultry.

9. **Read the Nutrition Facts**
   Make the right choices when buying food. Pay attention to important nutrients to know as well as calories, fats, sodium, and the rest of the Nutrition Facts label. Ask your doctor if there are ingredients and nutrients you might need to limit or to increase.

10. **Ask your doctor about vitamins or supplements**
    Food is the best way to get nutrients you need. Should you take vitamins or other pills or powders with herbs and minerals? These are called dietary supplements. Your doctor will know if you need them. More may not be better. Some can interfere with your medicines or affect your medical conditions.

For more information:

- **On nutrition, meal programs, and shopping** - Federal Government Nutrition Websites:
  - [www.nutrition.gov](http://www.nutrition.gov) - learn more about health eating, food shopping, assistance programs, and nutrition-related health subjects.
  - [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov) – USDA Food Patterns
DID YOU KNOW?

First Vaccine
The first vaccine was developed in 1796 by Edward Jenner to prevent smallpox.

A woman over 50
Who is “somewhat active” needs about 1800 calories a day.

FAST FACTS

80%
The approximate percentage of kids who are obese who will become obese adults.

35%
The percentage of adults aged 65 and over that were obese in 2007-2010, representing over 8 million adults aged 65-74, and almost 5 million aged 75 and over.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
www.nutrition.gov

Learning in Retirement

Lifelong learning is the continuing pursuit of knowledge to build skills, explore new ideas, enhance understanding, and enrich life. Recent statistics from the US Department of Education show that adult students are the fastest growing educational demographic. As human beings, we never stop learning. Studies have shown that learning, even well beyond the traditional retirement age, can help maintain or buffer our physical and mental well-being.

Many agencies, organizations, and higher education partners in our community offer high-quality, lifelong learning opportunities for older adults. The Learning in Retirement (LIR) and Lifelong Learning Institute (LLI) programs offer special events, interest groups, and courses on topics such as music, art, literature, philosophy, history, physical fitness, and computers. Search the internet for these programs to find a class near you.

OASIS is a non-profit educational organization active in more than 50 cities that offers stimulating local classes in history and politics, visual and performing arts, financial and legal issues, writing, travel, and more. Find a class near you by visiting their website at www.oasinet.org.

Join a class today and keep yourself healthy longer!

ACO Contact Information

For questions or additional information on ACOs, visit: www.medicare.gov/acos.html

Or call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227)

Or TTY 1-877-486-2048

To contact us:
CHRISTUS Louisiana ACO
80 Versailles Blvd, Suite C
Alexandria, Louisiana 71303

Beneficiary Help Line
(844) 361-HELP (4357)

Compliance Hot Line
(844) 881-INFO (4636)

Website:
http://www.christus_health.org/aco-public-report-information-louisiana