



DIABETES TOOLKIT

DIABETES – CONSTITUENT LETTER

Date

Constituent

Address

City, State, Zip

Dear {Name}:

According to the American Diabetes Association, 23.6 million children and adults in the U.S. are living with diabetes, and 5.7 million of these cases are patients who are unaware they are living with this disease. By the year 2050, an estimated 48 million Americans will be diagnosed with this disease.

With these staggering statistics, I wanted to take time to write to my constituents to educate you on how to recognize the symptoms of this disease, and if you have been diagnosed with diabetes, to provide you with information on how to manage this disease and prevent future complications.

Some symptoms to look for if you suspect you have diabetes include: frequent urination, excessive thirst, unexplained weight loss, extreme hunger, sudden vision changes, tingling or numbness in hands and feet, and fatigue. Diabetes frequently goes undiagnosed simply because many of the symptoms seem harmless. If you or someone you know suspects they may have diabetes, encourage them to be tested at their physician's office, community health center, or local pharmacy clinic.

Diabetes can often lead to serious complications and premature death. Some complications of diabetes include: heart disease, kidney disease, blindness, and lower-limb amputations. Lower-limb amputations occur when high blood sugar damages blood vessels and leads to blockage. These blocked vessels in legs can cause pain and impair circulation.

There are steps that patients with diabetes can take to help control the disease and lower the risk of complications. Patients with type 2 diabetes can control their blood glucose by eating healthy, creating an exercise program, losing excess weight, and taking oral medications. People who have type 1 diabetes don't make insulin. For these patients, injecting insulin is the only way they can help keep their blood glucose levels down.

As your legislator, my goal is to educate my constituents who are living with diabetes, or have a relative dealing with this disease, about proper diabetes management to prevent future complications. I encourage you to learn more about diabetes by contacting the American Diabetes Association (1-800-DIABETES or AskADA@diabetes.org). For more information, please visit my website at {website} or contact my office at {phone number}.

Sincerely,

{Name of Legislator}