

Six million people have type 2 diabetes and don't know it - could you be one?

by Bend Weekly News Sources

An estimated 17 million of Americans have diabetes. Left unmanaged, diabetes can cause severe or even life-threatening complications. But how do you know if you have it? "People who are overweight and over 45 should talk to their doctor about being tested," explained Karen Killingsworth, RN, MHA, a certified diabetes educator for St. Charles Medical Center (SCMC). "People with diabetes often feel tired, thirsty, have a frequent need to urinate, have blurred vision, or have a tingling or numbness in the hands or feet. If you're experiencing those symptoms, you should talk to your doctor about a fasting blood glucose test or an oral glucose tolerance test." Diabetes is a disease that affects the way the body uses food. For people diagnosed with diabetes, managing the condition involves diet, exercise and blood glucose monitoring. Fortunately for Central Oregonians, Cascade Healthcare Community offers a comprehensive, ADA recognized program to support patients with nutritional and educational needs. "We have a variety of programs in both Bend and Redmond," Killingsworth explained. "A lot of people don't realize that many insurance programs cover diabetes and nutrition education. Even Medicare offers coverage, as long as the patient's physician has made a referral to our program." Want to learn more about living with diabetes? Call 318-4986 in Bend or 526-6690 in Redmond to request a brochure about our programs. You can access the SCMC support group information [here](#). "It's important to talk to your doctor about diabetes, whether you've already been diagnosed or just think you might need testing," Killingsworth added. "For patients who have diabetes, we can help make it easier to manage the condition."

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