

## Managing Diabetes is Key to Avoiding Deadly Complications

Washington Hospital Seminar Focuses on Prevention and Treatment

Diabetes is a life-altering chronic disease that must be properly managed to avoid serious and even deadly complications. Diabetes causes blood sugar (glucose) levels to rise, which can damage blood vessels and other organs in the body.

"Diabetes can cause heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, nerve damage, and eye problems," said Dr. Archana Bindra, an endocrinologist and member of the Washington Hospital Medical Staff. "But the risk for these complications can be reduced with proper management."



To stay healthy, it is important for people with diabetes to take medications as directed, eat right, exercise, and learn as much as possible about the disease. Dr. Archana Bindra, an endocrinologist and member of the medical staff at Washington Hospital, will offer tips for keeping diabetes under control at an upcoming seminar titled "Diabetes Update." The free seminar is scheduled for Thursday, March 7, from 7 to 8 p.m. and will be held at the Conrad E. Anderson, M.D. Auditorium, 2500 Mowry Avenue (Washington West), in Fremont.

She will offer tips for keeping diabetes under control at an upcoming seminar titled "Diabetes Update," scheduled for Thursday, March 7, from 7 to 8 p.m. The seminar is part of Washington Hospital's free monthly Diabetes Matters education series and will be held at the Conrad E. Anderson, M.D. Auditorium, 2500 Mowry Avenue (Washington West), in Fremont.

Diabetes occurs when the body does not produce enough insulin or is not able to use it properly. Insulin is a hormone needed to convert sugar, starches, and other food into energy. When this process doesn't work properly, glucose levels in the blood can get too high.

She will spend some time talking about a condition called prediabetes, when blood glucose levels are higher than normal, but not high enough to be diagnosed with type 2 diabetes. According to Dr. Bindra, recent research has shown that some long-term damage to the body, especially the heart and circulatory system, may already be occurring during prediabetes.

"Not everyone with prediabetes will develop type 2 diabetes," she said. "Diet, exercise, and weight loss can help to prevent type 2 diabetes."

### Higher Risk

Dr. Bindra will discuss some of the complications of diabetes. Diabetes dramatically increases the risk of various cardiovascular problems, including coronary artery disease, heart attack, stroke, narrowing of arteries, and high blood pressure. In fact, the death rate from heart disease is two to four times higher for people with diabetes than for people without the disease, according to the American Heart Association.

Neuropathy or nerve damage is another serious complication. Elevated glucose levels damage the walls of the tiny blood vessels that feed the nerves. This nerve damage can cause tingling and numbness in the fingers, toes, and legs.

Nerve damage in the feet or poor blood flow to the feet increases the risk of foot problems. Left untreated, cuts and blisters on the feet can become infected. Severe damage could require toe, foot, or leg amputation.

If the tiny blood vessels that make up the filtering system in the kidneys become too damaged, kidney failure or irreversible end-stage kidney disease can result, requiring dialysis or a kidney transplant. Diabetes can also damage the blood vessels in the retina, causing diabetic retinopathy, which can lead to

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## To Avoid Stroke, Start Here

### Free Stroke Education Series Begins Again with Introduction to Stroke

Every month Dr. Ash Jain, cardiologist and medical director of Washington Hospital's Stroke Program, invites community members to learn about different aspects of stroke, a potentially deadly disease process that occurs when a clot blocks the blood supply to the brain or when a blood vessel in the brain bursts.

Next Tuesday, March 5, the Free Stroke Education Series at Washington Hospital will begin again, giving community members an in-depth introduction to stroke and a better understanding of their risk.

#### Start from the Beginning

"The beginning of the Stroke Education Series is very important, particularly for members of the community who don't fully understand what stroke is or may not be able to recognize its symptoms," Dr. Jain explains.

He adds that the Stroke Program relies on community members to know the signs of stroke so that they can seek emergency medical attention immediately if they suspect a stroke in themselves or someone close to them.

"We are always seeking to improve patients' outcomes, because stroke is the most devastating disease there is," Dr. Jain says. "Something people may not realize is that they play a critical role in stroke care. Timing is everything when it comes to treatment of stroke, and when community members recognize stroke, they are much more likely to take the appropriate action."

Methods for treating and diagnosing stroke are constantly evolving, and the Stroke Education Series is a good way to stay up-to-date on the latest advancements from experts in the field.

"Part of the reason I attended last year's World Stroke Congress in Brazil was to ensure that our program is doing all it can to improve our patients' outcomes following stroke," Dr. Jain says. "However, the conference was about managing and preventing stroke, with little about the patient who also plays an important role. This is why I strongly encourage community members to learn more about stroke before it happens, as that is where cycle of management starts and ends. Hence, we can improve results if we address the start of the cycle—at the point when the patient quickly recognizes the symptoms and seeks help."

Just being able to identify signs and symptoms of stroke and knowing when to call 9-1-1 can have a significant impact on stroke outcomes. Likewise, the faster someone reaches the hospital for stroke treatment, the better the chances are for recovery, according to Dr. Jain.

"We have a very efficient process for managing acute stroke, starting from the moment 9-1-1 is called, at which



Being able to identify signs and symptoms of stroke and knowing when to call 9-1-1 can have a significant impact on stroke outcomes. To learn more about stroke, how to recognize symptoms and understand your risk factors, attend the free community education seminar next Tuesday, March 5 from 6 to 8 p.m. in the Conrad E. Anderson, M.D. Auditorium, (Washington West building) located at 2500 Mowry Avenue in Fremont. To register, visit [www.whhs.com](http://www.whhs.com) or call (800) 963-7070.

point the cascade of care in the hospital starts immediately," he says. "Getting to the ER if they suspect stroke can make the difference between minimal damage and long-term disability or death. This introduction to stroke seminar is an excellent means to learn the basics of stroke, including how to recognize it and prevent it."

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# Health & Wellness

### Medicare: Are You Turning 65?

**Wednesday, March 6, 2013  
6:30 to 8:30 p.m.**

**Conrad E. Anderson, M.D. Auditorium, Rooms A & B  
(Washington West, 2500 Mowry Ave., Fremont)**

This is your opportunity to learn about Medicare. Find out what qualifications are needed for Medicare Part D (prescription drug plan) and Medicare Advantage plans.

#### Free Community Seminars

**SPEAKER**

**Kristi Caracappa**  
Health Insurance Information  
Service Coordinator  
Washington Hospital  
Healthcare System

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Call (800) 963-7070, or  
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Seminars may be televised on InHealth, a Washington Hospital Channel (Comcast Channel 78) and online at [www.inhealth.tv](http://www.inhealth.tv).

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