

VISITING HOURS

# Nov. Is National Diabetes Awareness Month

**BY SUSAN BARNES, BSN, RN, CDE, CPT**  
Program Coordinator of the Dakota Diabetes Center

November is the month, nationally, to work on diabetes awareness. Nov. 14 is also World Diabetes Day to increase awareness of the alarming increase of Diabetes worldwide. The logo of the World Diabetes Day is a blue circle. It represents life, health and unity. The World Diabetes Day Monument Challenge put on by the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) takes place all over the world, lighting popular monuments blue the evening of Nov. 13 to help recognize this important day. South Dakota will have two monuments participating: the State Capitol in Pierre and Falls Park in Sioux Falls.

Diabetes is a term used for a group of different diseases where the body is not able to handle digested food properly for energy. The level of sugar in the blood becomes high. About 8.3 percent of the United States population has diabetes (National Diabetes Statistics 2011, CDC). The diabetes population and the related costs are expected to at least double in the next 25 years.

The most common type of diabetes is type 2 diabetes. There are many risk factors for type 2 diabetes. They include:

- Obesity and overweight
- Lack of exercise

- Previously identified pre-diabetes
- Increased age
- High blood pressure and high cholesterol
- Family history of diabetes
- History of gestational Diabetes
- Ethnicity - higher rates of diabetes have been reported in Asians, Hispanics, Indigenous peoples (USA, Canada, Australia) and African Americans
- Many people with type 2 diabetes or pre-diabetes have no initial symptoms. In type 1 diabetes the symptoms tend to come on quickly. If you have signs of diabetes, see your health care provider. Signs of diabetes can include:
  - Frequent urination
  - Excessive thirst
  - Increased hunger
  - Unexplained Weight loss
  - Tiredness
  - Vomiting and stomach pain (often mistaken as the flu)
  - A tingling sensation or numbness in the hands or feet
  - Blurred vision
  - Frequent infections
- Slow-healing wounds



It is estimated that another 30 percent of the U.S. Population over the age of 20 has pre-diabetes (National Diabetes Statistics 2011, CDC). The national rate of pre-diabetes is also increasing. Pre-diabetes is a condition where your blood sugar level, or A1C levels, are higher than normal but not high enough to be called diabetes. People with pre-diabetes are at higher risk of having heart disease and many develop diabetes. Studies show weight loss of 5 to 7 percent and physical activity can reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes by 58 percent. Lifestyle changes

Managing diabetes includes learning coping and lifestyle changes to reach a healthier weight and activity level. There are many courageous people that reach for their dreams and live healthy. Actions that lower your risk for diabetes complications include:

- Talk to you health care provider to learn about controlling your blood pressure, cholesterol and A1C.
- Slowly work up to 30 minutes of moderate exercise five days a week.
- Do a type of muscle strengthening exercise two times a week.

- Eat more fruits and vegetables instead of high calorie or processed food with out nutritional value.
- Test your blood sugar.

This year there is a diabetes test challenge for people with diabetes. Test your blood sugar. Do some sort of physical activity for 14 minutes. Test your blood sugar again after the exercise. You will be pleasantly surprised to see your blood sugar go down. Before Nov. 14 you can submit your results online to showcase the importance of exercise in the management and control of diabetes. Find out more about this year's campaign at <http://bigbluetest.org>.

Please join Avera Sacred Heart Hospital and the Dakota Diabetes Center on Nov. 30 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. for a free Diabetic Foot Screening Clinic. There will be a brief presentation on diabetes foot care given by Drs. Terrence Pederson and Scott Torness, podiatrists at Avera Foot & Ankle Clinic, at 11a.m. followed by the screening. Bone density screenings, video on pre-diabetes and diabetes prevention, and massages will also be available.

THIS WEEKLY COLUMN IS PRODUCED BY THE PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICE AT AVERA SACRED HEART HOSPITAL TO PROMOTE HEALTHY LIFESTYLES AND PROVIDE USEFUL MEDICAL INFORMATION TO OUR COMMUNITY.

# Are Meetings A Waste Of River Time? Not Necessarily

**BY VAL FARMER**  
[www.valfarmer.com](http://www.valfarmer.com)



Val FARMER

Have you been in a meeting that was a waste of time? Were a couple of picky agenda items talked to death while the important items got a short shrift? Did people leave the meeting feeling angry? Was there a chance for people with minority views to be heard? Was the meeting really necessary in the first place?

A good meeting just doesn't happen. It takes work, skill and preparation. Many people end up leading meetings even though they haven't been trained in how to do it. The skills for leading a meeting can be learned.

**Why meetings fail to accomplish their objectives.**

- **Not goal-oriented.** The purpose of the meeting is not well defined. There is no consensus on the nature of the problem being considered.

- **Poorly planned and organized.** Meetings lack direction. The group spends excessive time on inconsequential problems not worth solving and avoids addressing important issues.

- **The meeting is inadequate for the scope of the problem.** There is not enough time, effort or resources to resolve the issue at hand.

- **Inappropriate agenda items.** Failure to recognize who should make a decision and that some issues are more appropriately handled by staff or committee.

- **Inadequate delegation.** Group members need to be given responsibility in order to take hold and make a meaningful contribution.

- **Emotional processes prevail.** Decisions are based on opinions and value judgments rather than on available facts.

- **Fear.** The risk of being wrong makes the group avoid resolving an issue.

- **Problem personalities.** Personality "powderkegs" who "bomb" group consensus.

**Factors in an effective meeting.** Successful meetings depend on developing and using an agenda as the governing plan for the meeting. Being prepared and expecting others to be prepared is important. Having the agenda available before the meeting and checking ahead with members about their responsibilities improves the quality of the meeting.

ing. The most formal structure requires rules for discussion and decision-making that makes the meeting fair and orderly. The most common set of rules is Robert's

Rules of Order. The basic principles behind the rules are:

- Only one subject under consideration at a time.
- Each item is entitled to a free and full debate.
- All members have equal rights.
- The rights of the minority must be protected while the will of the majority must prevail.
- Once a decision has been made, every member of the group must support it.

**The moderator is a big key.** An effective meeting depends on a strong moderator. The moderator takes charge and establishes control over the meeting. The overall objective of the meeting determines the amount of structure or control the moderator wishes to exert.

The moderator is to keep the group focused on the topic. He or she needs to be gently and respectfully assertive in redirecting discussion to the appropriate part of the agenda.

The moderator manages the time of the meeting, in starting and ending and keeping the agenda moving at a productive rate. When the discussion starts to be repetitious, the moderator determines when to resolve the issue.

The moderator is goal-oriented and moves the group toward a consensus decision while making sure the discussion has been thorough and inclusive. Decisions are made through a formal process.

At the end of a meeting, the moderator summarizes decisions, reviews assignments, thanks everyone for their participation and reviews the date and time of the next meeting.

**Resolving conflict.** The moderator draws out opinion and conflict from the group. Everyone needs to have his or her

views fully heard. One or two strong personalities should not dominate the process at others' expense. One role of the moderator is to ensure fairness in the meeting.

People in the meeting assume different roles such as idealists, pragmatists, analysts, realists, advocates and critics. The challenge of managing the group process is to draw from the strengths of each member without violating their sense of importance, competence or acceptance.

The moderator must manage conflict in the meeting and keep it at moderate levels. A moderator encourages participation by having a safe atmosphere for discussion. A moderator has to defuse emotion in the meeting by artful interventions such as tabling the discussion, calling for a brief recess, interrupting and redefining the conflict in gentler terms. In this process the moderator keeps his or her own emotions under control.

The moderator must not use his or her power to thwart majority rule or to promote a private agenda. The moderator can yield the chair to another member when he or she wants to participate actively in discussions or advocate for a position.

**Everyone is responsible.** The responsibility for having a good meeting isn't all on the moderator. Group members who understand what it takes to have a good meeting can govern their behavior, stick to the agenda, follow the rules, be constructive, show respect and be open-minded to others' opinions.

They need to become skilled at compromise and negotiation rather than confrontation to resolve disputes. Leaders can coach some group members on meeting etiquette prior to the meetings to prevent problems from reoccurring.

For more information on leadership and family business meetings, visit Val Farmer's website at [www.valfarmer.com](http://www.valfarmer.com).

*Val Farmer is a clinical psychologist specializing in family business consultation and mediation with farm families. He lives in Wildwood, Missouri and can be contacted through his website.*

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all shoreline, took photographs of every mile of shoreline and every place that needed clean-up. ...

"We documented every type of geomorphic change in the river that we could see," he said.

The results of the assessment have only just be completed, and have not yet been made public, but eventually will be placed on the Missouri National Recreational River's website.

Two of the major focuses of the assessment are clean-up and bank stabilization.

Volunteers now are being sought to help with some of the clean-up, but some of the materials now in the water are hazardous, requiring the assistance of the Environment Protection Agency.

"There's all types of material

— there are propane tanks, all types of hazardous material up and down the river that we're going to have to deal with," Mietz said.

Two of the larger items featured in the presentation were a refrigerator, and a full-size Airstream trailer submerged in the mud.

In some cases, clean-up and stabilization go hand in hand. Many people along the shoreline erected their own barriers against the floodwater using items such as rock and broken chunks of concrete.

These, however, were unpermitted.

"Folks that want to stabilize their banks anywhere are required under the Clean Water Act and the River and Harbors Act to seek a permit through the Corps of Engineers to alter that waterway," Mietz said. "Within the Wild and Scenic River, the Corps of Engineers is then required to seek our consultation on whether it is appropriate, and if it is appropriate, what kind of stipula-

tions the people must do to maintain the wild and scenic areas of the river. ...

"Where we do see bank stabilization that is not permitted, or has not been permitted yet, we will be talking to the Corps and telling them to contact the landowner in seeking a permit, and then we'll go through that regulatory process," he said.

When a permit is given, it usually is done so because the barrier will be created using "natural" materials.

Mietz said piling chunks of concrete on the shore "is not good stabilization," and can result in those concrete pieces being swept in the water should they become submerged.

"All it's doing then is polluting the river," he said.

Tuesday's presentation was sponsored by the Living Group of the South Dakota Sierra Club.

For more information, visit [www.nps.gov/mnrr](http://www.nps.gov/mnrr).

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