



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**PRESS RELEASE**

Local HSHS hospitals encourage you to know the signs of diabetes  
*November is Diabetes Awareness Month*

**BREESE, HIGHLAND & GREENVILLE, Ill.** — An estimated 37 million people are living with diabetes in the United States – the highest it has ever been, according to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC).

Most cases are type 2 diabetes, which means your body doesn't use insulin properly. Type 2 is largely preventable through regular physical activity and a healthy and balanced diet says Lisa Ketchem, RN, diabetes patient educator at HSHS St. Joseph's Hospitals in Breese and Highland and HSHS Holy Family Hospital in Greenville.

"Symptoms of type 2 diabetes often develop slowly and can be subtle," says Ketchem. "That's why it's important to know the signs so you can watch for even small changes in how you feel and look."

Talk with your doctor if any of these symptoms persist:

- Frequent urination
- Feeling thirsty
- Feeling hungry, even when eating
- Extreme fatigue
- Blurry vision
- Cuts and bruises that are slow to heal
- Weight loss
- Tingling, pain or numbness in hands and feet

Diabetes can complicate high blood pressure, high cholesterol, kidney disease, vision impairment and other health-related complications, such as heart attack and stroke.

A1C is a type of test that can identify [prediabetes](#), which means blood glucose levels are higher than normal, but not yet high enough to be diagnosed as diabetic. The CDC says 96 million Americans - more than one in three – have prediabetes. If it's determined you have prediabetes, it does not mean you'll develop type 2, especially if you make changes in your lifestyle regarding exercise and nutrition.

“Even small changes like taking the stairs, walking around the block regularly or eating less sugar can help delay or prevent the disease,” says Ketchem. “You should work with a health care provider to develop a plan that works for you and will help avoid a lifetime of medications or insulin monitoring.”

A physician can evaluate your risk level and complete bloodwork to diagnose diabetes. A consultation with a clinical dietitian or diabetes educator may also help identify ways to reduce your risk factors. You can also take a one-minute Diabetes Risk Test through the American Diabetes Association at:

[www.diabetes.org/risk-test](http://www.diabetes.org/risk-test).

### **Local Services Available**

Licensed dietitians on the clinical nutrition and diabetes services team at HSHS St. Joseph's Hospitals in Breese and Highland and HSHS Holy Family Hospital are available to help those with diabetes with special diets and weight management.

Counseling appointments are available with the licensed dietitians at any of the hospitals. Appointments are scheduled Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more information or to make an appointment, contact Kayla Barnes, RD, at 618-526-5336 or email [kayla.barnes@hshs.org](mailto:kayla.barnes@hshs.org).

All three HSHS hospitals also offer a Diabetes Self-Management Education program where a registered dietitian and diabetes patient educator can help you successfully manage diabetes through medication, diet and exercise, and live life to the fullest. The Diabetes Self-Management Education program at these local hospitals is recognized by the American Diabetes Association, which allows Medicare to cover the cost of diabetes education and dietitian consultations for those with diabetes. A physician referral is required for this program. Upon referral, consult your insurance provider to ask if you are covered. To find out more information, contact Kayla Barnes or Lisa Ketchem, RN, BSN, at 618-526-5743 or email [lisa.ketchem@hshs.org](mailto:lisa.ketchem@hshs.org).

Diabetes education is also provided through monthly support groups held at each of the hospitals on the following days:

- St. Joseph's Hospital Breese – First Monday of each month at 4 p.m. in the Heritage Room.
- Holy Family Hospital – First Tuesday of each month at 4 p.m. in the Board Room.
- St. Joseph's Hospital Highland – First Thursday of each month at 4 p.m. in the Sullivan Conference Room.

Registration is required. Please contact Lisa Ketchem at 618-526-5743 or [lisa.ketchem@hshs.org](mailto:lisa.ketchem@hshs.org) to register or for more information.

The hospitals also offer an online support group, offering helpful resources and engagement with others going through the same journey. To join the group, search Facebook for: [Diabetes Support Group: Bond, Madison and Clinton Counties](#).

For more information on diabetes, visit [diabetes.org](http://diabetes.org).

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**About Hospital Sisters Health System**

Hospital Sisters Health System's (HSHS) mission is to reveal and embody Christ's healing love for all people through our high-quality Franciscan health care ministry. HSHS provides state-of-the-art health care to our patients and is dedicated to serving all people, especially the most vulnerable, at each of our physician practices and 15 local hospitals in two states – Illinois (Breese, Decatur, Effingham, Greenville, Highland, Litchfield, O'Fallon, Shelbyville and Springfield) and Wisconsin (Chippewa Falls, Eau Claire, Oconto Falls, Sheboygan and two in Green Bay). HSHS is sponsored by Hospital Sisters Ministries, and [Hospital Sisters of St. Francis](#) is the founding institute. For more information about HSHS, visit [hshs.org](http://hshs.org). For more information about Hospital Sisters of St. Francis, visit [hospitalsisters.org](http://hospitalsisters.org).