



Diabetes Fact Sheet for American Indian Commercial Tobacco Users

Protective Factors

Sacred Tobacco

- Only use tobacco for spiritual or ceremonial reasons.
- Work with a Quit Coach and use quit medications to have the best chance of quitting commercial tobacco use.

Traditional Foods

- Decrease high starch, sugar and carbohydrate foods.
- Eat lean meat like wild game and buffalo.
- Increase use of leafy vegetables like dandelion greens and spinach.

Native Games

- Get daily exercise. Pow Wow dancing, walking and Native Games are all good choices.

Tribal Health

- Ask a medical provider or traditional healer for help with controlling blood sugars and quitting commercial tobacco use.

SMOKERS HAVE A 30% TO 40% HIGHER RISK OF DEVELOPING TYPE 2 DIABETES THAN NONSMOKERS.¹

Commercial Tobacco and Diabetes DON'T Mix – Keep tobacco sacred in your community and your life!

Diabetes is a disease in which the blood sugar levels are higher than normal because the body doesn't make enough insulin or can't use insulin very well. With this disease, less sugar gets into the cells and instead builds up in the blood.²

Type 2 diabetes is the most common in adults and accounts for more than 90% of all diabetes cases. Type 1 diabetes most often develops in children or young adults.³

19% of American Indians in Montana have diabetes.⁴

People with diabetes who smoke are more likely to have trouble with insulin dosing and controlling their disease and have a higher risk for serious health complications, including kidney failure, blindness, amputations, and stroke.¹



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SOURCES

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2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [Basics About Diabetes](#) [last updated 2017 Jul 20; accessed 2018 Mar 22].
3. National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Disease. Diabetes Overview [last updated 2014 Apr 2; accessed 2014 May 5].
4. Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2017.