

The Ochsner-Xavier Institute for Health Equity and Research (OXIHER) invites you to learn about the impact of diabetes on our communities, and how innovative solutions like Ochsner's Digital Medicine and Eat Fit programs are making a difference.

## Diabetes affects 38.4 million Americans

Type 2 diabetes, also known as adult-onset diabetes, is a chronic condition that occurs from insulin deficiency (a condition where the body does not produce enough insulin) or insulin resistance (a condition where the body does not use insulin efficiently). This leads to consistently high levels of blood glucose which can, over time, lead to serious health challenges if left untreated.

In highlighting this disease, OXIHER pays close attention to its **outside impact on minority communities**, while rallying to **reverse the epidemic for all communities**. We advocate for **advanced research, early detection, education, and culturally inclusive solutions**. Together, we stand for our neighbors, family, and friends — united on the front lines for a cure. Join us to explore diabetes facts and solutions for change.

## Diabetes Health Disparities

According to [America's Health Rankings](#), 11.5% of adults in the United States report a health professional telling them that they have diabetes. **Diabetes is slightly more prevalent in men (12.6%) than women (11.6%).**

Among adults **65 years or older, 23.9% have been diagnosed** with diabetes followed by 15.7% of 45–64-year-olds, and 3.6% of 18–44 year-olds.

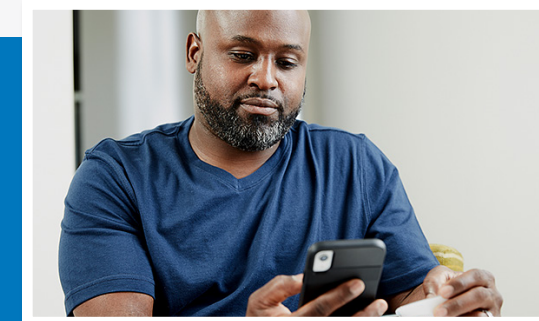
Diabetes is one of several chronic conditions contributing to over two-thirds of preventable premature death in Louisiana, making it a key focus of the Healthy State initiative. **Louisiana's diabetes rate far exceeds that of the national average at 14.8%**, placing the state 44th overall—just shy of the bottom five.

As with many chronic diseases, **diabetes disproportionately affects people of color** in the United States. American Indian/Alaskan Natives have the highest prevalence at 17.9%. In Louisiana, 19.7% of Blacks report being told by a health professional that they have diabetes compared to the national average of 15.9%. Moreover, in 2019, non-Hispanic Blacks were **2.5 times more likely to be hospitalized**, 3.2 times more likely to be diagnosed with end stage renal disease, and twice as likely to die from diabetes compared to non-Hispanic whites, nationally.

## Ochsner Digital Medicine

Ochsner's Digital Medicine program assists members in managing their Type 2 diabetes remotely under the guidance of health coaches, clinical pharmacists, dietitians, and other licensed clinicians. The remote platform provides continuous, coordinated care, and removes the need for additional in-person clinic visits. Most importantly, it works.

Within the program, **81% of enrolled members met their A1C goal after 6 months**. A1C is the important measure of average blood glucose levels. Ochsner Digital Medicine is a fully covered benefit for eligible participants enrolled in an Ochsner Employee Health Plan. Benefits include:



- Preferred digital device at no cost (glucometer)
- \$0 copays on select prescriptions when filled at an Ochsner Pharmacy and Wellness location
- No-cost diabetes testing supplies



**Anderson Watts:**  
Looking Forward with Ochsner Digital Medicine

## Anderson Watts' Story

Hundreds of members have experienced success with Ochsner's Digital Medicine diabetes management. Click [HERE](#) to take a look at Anderson Watts' transformative journey in managing his Type 2 diabetes. We invite you to [share your story](#).

## Nutrition and Diabetes Health Management

Genetics, family history and race/ethnicity are all risk factors for diabetes. Nutrition and lifestyle choices also play a role. All carbohydrates are broken down into sugars, and all carbohydrate-based foods affect blood glucose. But some have a greater impact. **Simple and refined carbohydrates are carbs that are quickly broken down by the body and cause significantly greater spikes in blood glucose levels.** Examples include pastries, breakfast cereals, fruit juices, soda, candy, processed grains (white rice, pasta, bread), and others.

Conversely, **complex carbohydrates increase blood glucose levels over time and often contain fiber, aiding in satiety.** However, all things in moderation, as overconsumption of sources of hidden sugars (examples include yogurt, instant oatmeal, protein bars, coffee creamers, energy drinks and even vegetables such as corn and potatoes) can cause problems in managing healthy blood glucose levels.



## Eat Fit for Diabetes Nutritional Support

Ochsner's [Eat Fit](#) nonprofit initiative collaborates with local restaurants, farmers markets, grocery stores and other outlets to spotlight healthful meal options. The program encourages food service partners to offer nutritious alternatives for those who want to eat mindfully, watch their weight, and manage conditions like diabetes, blood pressure and cholesterol.

Eat Fit also provides recipes to aid in meal prep and planning that are on par with national recommendations for diabetes control. This holiday season, consider incorporating some of the following Eat Fit recipes and resources into your traditional gatherings. And remember to make it your own!



Use this as a guide, adding your own personal touch and cultural mainstays for you and your family to enjoy.

[Food Substitution Tips for Diabetics During the Holidays](#)

[9 Tips for People with Diabetes During the Holidays](#)

[10 Tips to Manage Gestational Diabetes During the 2024 Holidays](#)

[Best Ways to Eat Mindfully During the Holidays](#)

[7 Healthy and Delicious Holiday Food Swaps](#)