



NEWS RELEASE

## America's Diabetes Challenge Unveils Common Challenges Affecting the Type 2 Diabetes Community

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Merck, the American Diabetes Association and Celebrity Voices Offer Tips to Help People Tackle Their Obstacles Head On

KENILWORTH, N.J. – Merck (NYSE: MRK), known as MSD outside the United States and Canada, and the American Diabetes Association today revealed common challenges affecting the millions of Americans living with type 2 diabetes as part of the program **America's Diabetes Challenge: Get to Your Goals**. Last year, award-winning artist Tim McGraw, renowned actress S. Epatha Merkerson and Chef Leticia Moreinos Schwartz called on patients and their loved ones to share their stories – from inspirational successes to daily struggles. Thousands of people from across the country responded, and revealed common challenges like eating healthy, exercising, sticking to a treatment plan and coping with the disease.

"Type 2 diabetes has affected my family, friends and fans, so I've learned it can be challenging to manage. It was great to hear from so many people, and I'm impressed by everyone's dedication to their health," said McGraw. "The stories we received shed an important light on the similar hardships people in the community face as they work toward achieving their blood sugar goals."

Since its inception three years ago, America's Diabetes Challenge has encouraged people with type 2 diabetes to work with their doctor to set and reach their A1C (average blood glucose level over the past 2 to 3 months) goal. It is also designed to help people learn if they are at risk of low blood glucose, known as hypoglycemia, and how to help reduce that risk. Managing blood glucose through diet, exercise and medication (if prescribed) is key to treating diabetes, but it is not easy. Nearly 30 million Americans have diabetes, approximately 90 to 95 percent of whom



have type 2 diabetes. About one-third of adults with diabetes are not at their A1C goal. In addition, although many people are aware of the importance of managing high blood glucose, they may not know the causes and symptoms of low blood glucose.

America's Diabetes Challenge is now **providing tips** that address the community's common challenges and will help people work with their doctor to set and reach their blood glucose goals.

"I've been living with type 2 diabetes for 14 years, and I've definitely had my share of ups and downs," said Merckerson. "But, I've come to realize that I'm not alone; people living with type 2 diabetes all have their struggles, and being proactive can make a big difference. I'm eager to try these tips, especially when I'm spending long hours on set, and I look forward to seeing everyone's progress as they take this next step with me."

People can visit **AmericasDiabetesChallenge.com** to access the information below, and they should speak with their doctor before making any changes to their individualized treatment plan:

- **Eating Healthy:** Eating healthy does not have to be boring. For extra flavor, people can use salt-free spices and herbs like dried basil, cumin, chili powder and cayenne. Finding ways to enjoy food may make it easier to maintain a healthy diet
- **Exercising:** Working out with a friend or partner can make fitness fun, and making a plan with someone can help keep people committed to their exercise goals. People should make sure to talk to their doctor before starting or making any changes to their exercise routine
- **Sticking to a Treatment Plan:** People who are prescribed medication by their doctor may struggle to remember to take it. Using a pillbox that is filled each week or scheduling reminders on a phone may be helpful
- **Coping with the Disease:** Whether it is a doctor, family member or friend, patients should surround themselves with people who can support them when they struggle and celebrate with them when they reach a goal

"In 2016, the American Diabetes Association and Merck ignited a genuine and essential dialogue with the type 2 diabetes community that brought the realities of living with the disease to the forefront," said Alicia H. McAuliffe-Fogarty, PhD, CPsychol, Vice President of Lifestyle Management, American Diabetes Association. "We're proud to collaborate on America's Diabetes Challenge again this year and to deliver on our joint promise to help address the challenges people with diabetes and their loved ones experience."

As people try the program tips, they can share how they are putting them into action by submitting a photo, story or video at **AmericasDiabetesChallenge.com**. On the website, they will find additional information and resources to help them manage their overall treatment plan and reach their blood glucose goals. Patients and their loved ones

can also join the America's Diabetes Challenge community by visiting [facebook.com/AmericasDiabetesChallenge](https://facebook.com/AmericasDiabetesChallenge).

## About Type 2 Diabetes

More than 29 million Americans have diabetes, and 90 to 95 percent of these people have type 2 diabetes. When someone has type 2 diabetes, the body does not make enough insulin and/or the insulin that the body makes does not work properly. This causes blood glucose levels to become too high, and the body may also keep making glucose even though it does not need it. Once a person has type 2 diabetes, it does not go away, and high blood glucose levels over time can lead to serious health problems, such as heart disease and stroke.

## About the American Diabetes Association

More than 29 million Americans have diabetes, and every 23 seconds another person is diagnosed with diabetes. The American Diabetes Association (Association) is the global authority on diabetes and since 1940 has been committed to its mission to prevent and cure diabetes and to improve the lives of all people affected by diabetes. To tackle this global public health crisis, the Association drives discovery in research to treat, manage and prevent all types of diabetes, as well as to search for cures; raises voice to the urgency of the diabetes epidemic; and provides support and advocacy for people living with diabetes, those at risk of developing diabetes and the health care professionals who serve them. For more information, please call the American Diabetes Association at 1-800-DIABETES (1-800-342-2383) or visit [diabetes.org](https://diabetes.org). Information from both of these sources is available in English and Spanish. Find us on Facebook (American Diabetes Association), Twitter (@AmDiabetesAssn) and Instagram (@AmDiabetesAssn).

## About Merck

For more than a century, Merck, a leading global biopharmaceutical company known as MSD outside of the United States and Canada, has been inventing for life, bringing forward medicines and vaccines for many of the world's most challenging diseases. Through our prescription medicines, vaccines, biologic therapies and animal health products, we work with customers and operate in more than 140 countries to deliver innovative health solutions. We also demonstrate our commitment to increasing access to health care through far-reaching policies, programs and partnerships. Today, Merck continues to be at the forefront of research to advance the prevention and treatment of diseases that threaten people and communities around the world - including cancer, cardio-metabolic diseases, emerging animal diseases, Alzheimer's disease and infectious diseases including HIV and Ebola. For more information, visit [www.merck.com](https://www.merck.com) and connect with us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

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