

BODY PART MATCH-UP: CLASS ACTIVITY REVIEW

Heart and blood vessels: (Harry's Heart)

One of the biggest problems for people with diabetes is heart and blood vessel disease. Heart disease can lead to high blood pressure, heart attacks, and strokes. It also causes poor blood flow to the legs and feet. To check for heart disease, doctors may do some tests such as an EKG (electrocardiogram) to check the heart and a blood cholesterol test.

Diabetes and your eyes (Earl's Eyes)

Diabetes is the main cause of blindness in adults in the United States. People with diabetes should have a dilated eye exam once a year because you may develop eye problems and not know it. Many people do not notice symptoms since there is no pain; but some do have blurred vision after only having diabetes for a short time. Vision problems often are not noticed until the disease is well advanced, and vision cannot be restored. If the eyes are already damaged, an eye doctor may be able to save sight with laser treatments or surgery, but not without cost and risks.

Diabetes and your kidneys (Kevin's Kidneys)

Diabetes can also damage the small blood vessels in the kidneys that help filter out waste. This is called diabetic nephropathy (diabetic kidney disease). High blood pressure is associated with nephropathy. In addition, too much sugar (and sometimes too much protein) in blood or urine can damage kidneys. The kidneys cannot remove waste properly. When this happens, the blood will have to be filtered of waste through a dialysis machine.

Diabetes and your nerves (Frank's Feet)

Approximately 60-70% of people with diabetes have mild to severe forms of nerve damage due to diabetes. Severe forms of diabetic nerve disease are the major cause of foot and leg amputations. Nerve damage makes it hard for nerves to send messages to the brain and other parts of the body. If a person has nerve damage, they may not be able to feel blisters or sores on their feet. The sores can become infected, and, in serious cases, the foot may have to be amputated. Warning signs of nerve damage include tingling, burning, loss of feeling (numbness), sharp pain and/or weakness. To help prevent nerve damage, people with diabetes should check their feet every day.

Diabetes and your dental health (Gus' Gums)

Uncontrolled blood sugar can lead to infections of the gums and bones around the teeth. If this problem is not treated, teeth may become loose and fall out. To help prevent damage to gums and teeth, a dentist should be seen twice a year and informed that a person has diabetes. As always, it's important to brush and floss teeth each day. To prevent infection in gums, it's important to keep them clean even if original teeth are absent and dentures are worn instead.