



## News Release

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### **UDOH, Partners Offer Low-Cost A1C Testing**

(SALT LAKE CITY, UT) -- All Utahns with diabetes are encouraged to take advantage of low-cost A1C testing this month. The Utah Department of Health (UDOH) Diabetes Prevention and Control Program and the A1C Testing Partnership are offering the tests in recognition of American Diabetes Month and World Diabetes Day Friday, November 14.

Reduced-price A1C tests will be available to patients with diabetes for \$5 at select Smith's Pharmacies **from Thursday, November 13 through Saturday, November 15.**

The impact of diabetes in the U.S. and Utah is staggering. In 2006, the estimated cost (including medical costs and loss of productivity) of diabetes for people in Utah was \$927 million. 2007 data suggest that more than 124,000 (4.7%) Utahns have been diagnosed with diabetes, while another 45,000 Utahns have the disease but don't know it.

A1C – short for hemoglobin A1C – is a simple blood test that reflects an individual's average blood glucose (sugar) level over a three-month period. The test is one of the best indicators of diabetes control and maintenance, giving patients a good indication of how well their overall diabetes treatment plan is working. Physicians and diabetes educators use the results to make recommendations regarding medications and healthy lifestyle choices like nutrition and physical activity.

“Patients receive a lot of messages about diabetes and how to control their disease. We feel the need to shed light on the importance of patients knowing their own A1C levels,” said Richard Bullough, PhD, Director, UDOH Diabetes Prevention and Control Program. “We're thrilled to again be part of the testing partnership and know that getting patients

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more involved in managing their diabetes will reduce the overall social and economic impact of the disease.”

The A1C Testing Partnership includes UDOH, Smith’s Food & Drug Stores, Abbott Diabetes Care, Pfizer Pharmaceuticals, and the American Diabetes Association. Patients with diabetes can get the \$5 A1C test on **Thursday, November 13 (4 p.m. – 8 p.m.); Friday, November 14 (4 p.m. – 8 p.m.) and Saturday, November 15 (10 a.m. – 2 p.m.)** at these Smith’s Pharmacy locations:

- 455 South 500 East, SLC;
- 3215 South Valley St. (3300 East), SLC;
- 2038 East 9400 South (Sandy); and
- 1820 West 9000 South (West Jordan).

Diabetes educator Ginny Burns says persons with diabetes should check their A1C levels 2-4 times a year, but that the tests are no substitution for regular blood sugar self-checks. “Self-testing tells you your glucose level at the moment you test, A1C indicates long term control. You need both tests to give you a complete picture.”

For more information about A1C testing and the importance of understanding your level, call the UDOH Resource Line at 1-888-222-2542 or visit <http://health.utah.gov/diabetes/>.

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*The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public’s health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death, assuring access to affordable, quality health care, and promoting healthy lifestyles.*