

## **Atrium Health Navicent Programs Help Diabetes Patients Manage Their Condition** *November is American Diabetes Month*

**MACON, Ga., Nov. 20, 2023** – The community is invited to join Atrium Health Navicent in recognizing American Diabetes Month by learning about the disease and local programs that help to control diabetes.

Diabetes, a condition affecting an estimated 537 million people worldwide, is a metabolic disease in which the body is unable to produce enough insulin to regulate glucose levels in the bloodstream. Many cases of diabetes go undiagnosed. If left untreated, diabetes can lead to serious and life-threatening conditions including blindness, heart attack, stroke, kidney disease and amputation. It is the seventh leading cause of death in the United States.

“It is recommended to have a fasting glucose or hemoglobin A1c test performed to screen for diabetes. Patients with diabetes should have their A1c level monitored every three to six months depending on how well the condition is managed. It is important to take prescribed medications and sustain an appropriate diet in addition to good oral care and stress management,” said Dr. Monique Davis-Smith, Atrium Health Navicent’s Family Medicine Residency Program director and a primary care physician at Atrium Health Navicent Primary Care West Macon.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 37.3 million Americans have diabetes, and 1 in 5 of them don’t know they have it. About 96 million U.S. adults have prediabetes, and in the last 20 years, the number of adults diagnosed with diabetes has more than doubled as the American population has aged and become more overweight or obese.

In central Georgia, 17.2 percent of adults have reported being diagnosed with diabetes, a figure that’s well above the state and national percentages.

Atrium Health Navicent provides support for individuals diagnosed with diabetes through the Healthy Communities Diabetes Disease Management Program and Atrium Health Navicent Diabetes Healthways. Participants in both programs are offered education about diabetes management and ongoing support.

The Healthy Communities Diabetes Disease Management Program helps patients who are experiencing more frequent hospital readmissions and emergency room visits related to diabetes. Implemented in Bibb County in 2022, the program expanded in spring 2023 to include patients in Baldwin and Peach counties.

Patients served in this program are considered high risk, generally have other underlying health conditions, need higher levels of care and struggle with socio-economic barriers to receiving health care, such as having low income or transportation difficulties.

Atrium Health Navicent patients who are identified by providers as being at a high risk for readmission or emergency room visits are referred to the program where a team of nurses and social workers help patients bridge barriers that prevent them from managing their condition, and help them learn how to keep their diabetes in check. Patients may also be referred to the Food as Medicine Market, which operates not just as a food pantry, but as a Food Farmacy, where individuals facing food insecurity can also receive in-person nutrition advice.

In the program’s first year, 750 diabetes patients received life-changing assistance, which successfully reduced the number of subsequent admissions to the hospital for these patients.

Atrium Health Navicent Diabetes Healthways provides comprehensive education programs for people of all ages with diabetes. All programs are taught by clinicians specializing in the field of diabetes management, including Certified

Diabetes Care and Education Specialists (CDCES). The staff participates in community education and support groups as well as pediatric diabetes camps.

Learn more about [Healthy Communities](#) by calling 478-633-5623. For more information about [Atrium Health Navicent Diabetes Healthways](#), call 478-633-1531. To find a doctor, visit [www.NavicentHealth.org](http://www.NavicentHealth.org) and click “Find A Doctor.”

#### **About Atrium Health Navicent**

Atrium Health Navicent is the leading provider of health care in central and south Georgia and is committed to its mission of elevating health and well-being through compassionate care. Atrium Health Navicent is part of [Advocate Health](#), which is headquartered in Charlotte, North Carolina, and is the third-largest nonprofit health system in the United States, created from the combination of Atrium Health and Advocate Aurora Health. Atrium Health Navicent provides high-quality, personalized care in 53 specialties at more than 50 facilities throughout the region. As part of the largest, integrated, nonprofit health system in the Southeast, it is also able to tap into some of the nation’s leading medical experts and specialists with Atrium Health, allowing it to provide the best care close to home – including advanced innovations in virtual medicine and care. Throughout its 125-year history in the community, Atrium Health Navicent has remained dedicated to enhancing health and wellness for individuals throughout the region through nationally recognized quality care, community health initiatives and collaborative partnerships. It is also one of the leading teaching hospitals in the region, helping to ensure viability for rural health care for the next generation. For more information, please visit [www.NavicentHealth.org](http://www.NavicentHealth.org).

#### **About Advocate Health**

[Advocate Health](#) is the third-largest nonprofit integrated health system in the United States – created from the combination of Advocate Aurora Health and [Atrium Health](#). Providing care under the names [Advocate Health Care](#) in Illinois, Atrium Health in the Carolinas, Georgia and Alabama, and [Aurora Health Care](#) in Wisconsin, Advocate Health is a national leader in clinical innovation, health outcomes, consumer experience and value-based care, with [Wake Forest University School of Medicine](#) serving as the academic core of the enterprise. Headquartered in Charlotte, North Carolina, Advocate Health serves nearly 6 million patients and is engaged in hundreds of clinical trials and research studies. It is nationally recognized for its expertise in cardiology, neurosciences, oncology, pediatrics and rehabilitation, as well as organ transplants, burn treatments and specialized musculoskeletal programs. Advocate Health employs nearly 155,000 team members across 68 hospitals and over 1,000 care locations and offers one of the nation’s largest graduate medical education programs with over 2,000 residents and fellows across more than 200 programs. Committed to equitable care for all, Advocate Health provides nearly \$6 billion in annual community benefits.

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