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## FREE DIABETES PREVENTION PROGRAM STARTS SOON



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**Tampa, Fla.** – A diabetes prevention program to help those who would like to reduce the chance of developing Type 2 diabetes is being offered. Many places charge for this program, but the Florida Department of Health (DOH) in Hillsborough County is offering the National Diabetes Prevention program for free to help combat the growing health threat of obesity.

Trained lifestyle coaches guide participants to form healthy habits and achieve weight loss. Several classes are set to begin in September:

The first class will begin 1 p.m. on September 18, at the WellCare Health Plans Center, located at 8328 N. Florida Ave in Tampa.

Another class begins at noon on September 26, at the Florida Department of Health-Main Building, room 251, located at 1105 E Kennedy Blvd in Tampa.

Another class begins at 1 p.m. on September 27, at the Plant City Community Resource Center, located at 307 N. Michigan Ave in Plant City.

Classes are limited to approximately 15 participants. Based on demand, other classes will be offered throughout the year. Residents who are interested in the diabetes prevention program should call (813) 307-8000 ext. 7111 or email [programinfo@flhealth.gov](mailto:programinfo@flhealth.gov).

Those who complete the program can prevent or delay Type 2 diabetes by losing five to seven percent of their weight. For a 200-pound person, that is approximately ten to 14 pounds. Groups meet for 26 sessions and work with a Trained Lifestyle Coach. Participants will get to practice skills of healthy eating and physical activity for a sustained healthy lifestyle change.

To qualify for the program, a person must be overweight and at risk of developing diabetes. Many factors increase the risk for prediabetes and Type 2 diabetes:

- Being 45 years of age or older.
- Having a family member with diabetes.
- Having a family background of African-American, Hispanic/Latino, American-Indian, Asian-American, or Pacific-Islander.

- Having had diabetes while being pregnant (gestational diabetes), or having given birth to a baby weighing 9 pounds or more.
- Being physically active less than three times a week.

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