

Prevent T 2

Chaves County Cooperative Extension Service



THE SITUATION:

Type 2 diabetes is a growing public health concern in New Mexico, with approximately 13.1% of adults diagnosed and an estimated 549,000 adults living with prediabetes—yet only 30% are aware of their condition. Without intervention, 15–30% of individuals with prediabetes will develop type 2 diabetes within five years. Diabetes is linked to serious complications such as heart disease, kidney failure, and blindness, and it disproportionately affects rural and low-income populations. In New Mexico, the economic burden is staggering, with annual costs estimated at \$7 billion, including direct medical expenses and lost productivity. Obesity, a major risk factor, affects 32.4% of adults statewide, further increasing diabetes prevalence. Evidence-based lifestyle programs, such as the National Diabetes Prevention Program, can reduce risk by up to 50%, yet access and awareness remain limited, especially in underserved communities. These statistics underscore the urgent need for diabetes prevention education to promote healthy eating, physical activity, and self-management skills, particularly among high-risk populations.

EXTENSION RESPONSE:

The Chaves County Family and Consumer Sciences Agent conducted a yearly Life Style Change Program. Participants work with a trained lifestyle coach and a supportive peer group to learn practical strategies for eating healthier, increasing physical activity, managing stress, and overcoming barriers to change. The program uses a CDC-approved curriculum and meets weekly for the first six months, then monthly for the second half to reinforce skills and maintain progress.

IMPACTS: County Wide comments included: Fourteen participants started the program in January of 2025 with 8 participants completing the program. As a whole the class lost a total of 35 pounds with three participants lowering their A1C numbers below the pre diabetic range.

Participant comment:

The T2 Program has helped me realize that I needed to make changes to my eating habits. This is not a diet. This is a change of lifestyle. The T2 material is right on track with understanding the nature of humans and how we can fail at this change of lifestyle. It also provides us the tools, information and knowledge that we need to correct these failings and encouragement to keep trying. I have been able to slowly make positive changes to my lifestyle of preparing and eating different foods. I have learned that by adding more vegetables to each meal that it helps keep me full without over eating.

PUBLIC VALUE STATEMENT:

WE HELP INDIVIDUALS REDUCE THEIR RISK AND IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE. THESE EFFORTS NOT ONLY SAVE FAMILIES FROM THE EMOTIONAL AND FINANCIAL BURDEN OF CHRONIC DISEASE BUT ALSO LOWER HEALTHCARE COSTS AND STRENGTHEN THE OVERALL WELL-BEING OF OUR COMMUNITY. PREVENTION TODAY MEANS A HEALTHIER, MORE PRODUCTIVE TOMORROW FOR EVERYONE.

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