



# New Survey of People with Diabetic Nerve Pain Shows the Condition Significantly Impacts Daily Activities Such as Exercise and Sleep Yet Often Goes Untreated

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Fitness Expert Kim Lyons and Leading Diabetes Organization Motivate Patients to Take the Next Step to Manage this Pain Associated with Diabetes

(BUSINESS WIRE)--In a new online survey, eighty-five percent of people who experience diabetic nerve pain said that their pain was one of the top three most bothersome complications of their diabetes. Despite the fact that people with diabetic nerve pain recognize the condition's impact on their lives and eighty-four percent of those surveyed said they have discussed the condition with a healthcare provider, just slightly less than half of respondents (49 percent) were treating their pain. The survey was fielded as part of a new educational campaign, "Take the Next Step," which is designed to help people with diabetes recognize the symptoms of painful diabetic peripheral neuropathy (pDPN) and proactively talk to their healthcare professional about incorporating the treatment of pDPN into their overall diabetes care, which may include blood sugar control, diet, pain management, exercise or other changes in lifestyle. The initiative is supported through a sponsorship by Pfizer Inc.

Taking Control of Your Diabetes (TCOYD), a leading non-profit organization dedicated to educating people about diabetes, and Kim Lyons, personal trainer and nutritionist featured on NBC's hit show, "The Biggest Loser," are participating in this campaign to

raise awareness of pDPN, one of the most common and debilitating complications of diabetes. "Take the Next Step" features an activity program developed by Lyons to demonstrate activities that are appropriate for people with diabetes and help people with pDPN understand how increasing their activity level can help them control their pain. For more information, including Kim Lyons' activity program and tips and tools to help people with diabetes discuss pDPN with their physician, visit [www.diabetespainhelp.com](http://www.diabetespainhelp.com).

"Optimal blood sugar control has been shown to prevent the onset and delay the progression of pDPN and ease its symptoms," said Steven Edelman, MD, Founder and Director of the not-for-profit Taking Control of Your Diabetes and Professor of Medicine, University of California at San Diego. "Given the debilitating impact of pDPN, such as on a person's ability to be physically active and to fall asleep at night, treating the pain can really make a difference for these patients and help them get back to normal daily activities which in turn can help them better manage their diabetes."

#### Survey Shows pDPN Can Impact Lifestyle, Yet Many Unaware of Treatment Options

Of the people surveyed, almost two-thirds (64 percent) said that their nerve pain interfered with the daily activities that matter to them. The most common activities that respondents said were impacted by their pain were exercising (76 percent), falling asleep (71 percent) and spending time with or caring for family (68 percent). Of the more than half of those surveyed who were not being treated (51 percent), less than a third (32 percent) were aware of treatments that are approved to treat the condition.

Currently, nearly 24 million Americans suffer from diabetes. Approximately 20 percent of people with diabetes experience painful diabetic peripheral neuropathy, most commonly caused by poorly controlled blood sugar levels that result in nerve damage over time. Symptoms of pDPN may include burning, throbbing or painful tingling in the feet or hands. The pain associated with the condition can become extremely debilitating, affecting patients' everyday activities such as the motivation needed to exercise and be active and the ability to fall asleep. Difficulty maintaining an active lifestyle can hamper patients' ability to control their weight, an important key to diabetes management. Treatment guidelines point to the unique nature of pDPN and the need for specialized treatment, which can include prescription treatment for the pain.

"I was motivated to be a part of this campaign because I've seen the benefits of activity for people who suffer from pDPN," said Kim Lyons. "I know that for people with this kind of pain, engaging in physical activity might seem daunting at first, but people will be

amazed to see that taking small steps towards increasing activity level can make a big difference.”

## Prevention, Early Diagnosis and Aggressive Treatment Are Critical

People with diabetes can develop nerve pain at any time, but the risk is greater the longer a person has suffered from diabetes, with the highest rates among those who have had the condition for at least 25 years. In the early stages of nerve damage, some people have no symptoms, or may have numbness or tingling in the feet. These symptoms can be mild at first and because nerve damage can occur over several years, these cases may go unnoticed until the nerve damage progresses and becomes painful, sometimes leading to painful diabetic peripheral neuropathy.

A number of prescription medications are approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to help relieve the specific symptoms of pDPN. These medications can play an important role in helping to reduce the pain associated with this condition. Over-the-counter pain medicines such as acetaminophen and ibuprofen are frequently used, but have not been specifically approved by the FDA to treat painful diabetic peripheral neuropathy.

## About the Survey

The survey was conducted online by Impulse Research among 553 men and women, 18 and older who have either type I or II diabetes and are suffering from diabetic nerve pain in the United States, to assess the impact of nerve pain on their lives. The research was conducted in July 2009. The maximum expected sample error for a simple random sample of this size is +/- 3 percentage points. The survey was commissioned on behalf of Taking Control of Your Diabetes, and sponsored by Pfizer.

## About the “Take the Next Step” Campaign

The “Take the Next Step” program is designed to help people with diabetes better understand and manage painful diabetic peripheral neuropathy (pDPN), a complication of the disease that can have a debilitating impact on daily activities.

Taking Control of Your Diabetes (TCOYD), a leading non-profit organization dedicated to educating people about diabetes, and Kim Lyons, personal trainer featured on NBC’s hit show, “The Biggest Loser,” are participating in this campaign to raise awareness of pDPN, one of the most common and debilitating complications of diabetes. The Take the Next

Step campaign features a customized motivational program, developed by Lyons, which helps people with pDPN understand how to raise their activity level and better manage daily activities. Ms. Lyons will be traveling to a series of TCOYD health conferences this fall to share her activity program with conference attendees.

The “Take the Next Step” campaign is sponsored by Pfizer Inc.

#### About TCOYD

TCOYD is a not for profit organization dedicated to informing and empowering people with diabetes to become actively involved in their own health care. We do this through live national conferences, local events, publications, online resources and our educational television series. Participation in a TCOYD program is a turning point in so many lives - a day when people with diabetes are encouraged to confront their disease, their fears of it, fears of complications and of the treatments themselves. Each year at TCOYD we have the opportunity to spark a new understanding and a new energy in thousands of people living with this disease. Steven V. Edelman, MD, founder and director of Taking Control of Your Diabetes (TCOYD), was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes at the age of 15. Dr. Edelman is an internationally recognized leader in diabetes treatment, research and education.

For more information on TCOYD and local health conferences, please visit [www.tcoyd.org](http://www.tcoyd.org).

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