



Annual Diabetes Update - Eeyou Istchee 2004

Cree Diabetes Information System

**1,232 Eeyouch are
living with diabetes.***

**Half of them have learned
to lower their blood sugar
to healthy levels (A1c < 7.0%).**

**This will help them
prevent complications
from diabetes.**



Vol. 6.1

ISSN: 1482-9554

*** Based on information from the 2004 annual update of the
Cree Diabetes Information System.**

1,232 Eeyouch are living with diabetes in Eeyou Istchee (July 2004).

53% of Eeyouch living with diabetes have succeeded in keeping their blood sugar at a healthy level this year. However,

- ◆ The number of Eeyouch diagnosed with diabetes continues to increase every year.
- ◆ 27% of Eeyouch with diabetes are **under the age of 40 years**.
- ◆ 39% of all Eeyouch with diabetes **were diagnosed in the past 5 years**.

This is very important because they will need to keep their blood sugar at healthy levels for many years to prevent future complications from their diabetes.

- ◆ In the 60–69 age group almost half of all women have diabetes (47%).
- ◆ More than 50% of Eeyouch diagnosed with diabetes already have one or more diabetes-related complications. Most of these complications are in the early stages when damage is still reversible.
- ◆ Almost half (46%) of all deaths of Eeyouch with diabetes in the past 8 years were due to heart or kidney failure.

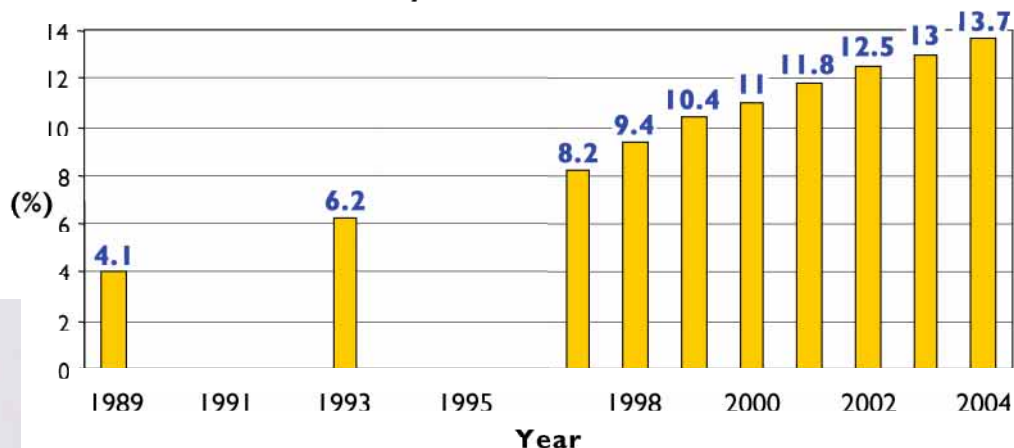


How is diabetes increasing in the Eeyou Nation?

The proportion of Eeyouch (aged 15 years and over) diagnosed with diabetes increased every year between 1989 and 2004. The rate of diabetes has risen from 4.1% to 13.7%.



Proportion (%) of Eeyouch with diabetes (aged 15 years and over), Eeyou Istchee, 1989-2004



Predictions for the proportion of Eeyouch with diabetes in the next 10-20 years

If nothing is done to stop the diabetes epidemic, it is likely that:

- ◆ In 10 years (2015), we expect 1 in every 5 Eeyouch (20%) aged 15 and over will have diabetes.
- ◆ In 20 years (2025), we expect 1 in every 4 Eeyouch (25%) aged 15 and over will have diabetes.

The numbers of Eeyouch developing diabetes can be decreased through efforts by individuals and communities to choose healthy foods and physical activity.

Diabetes in each community

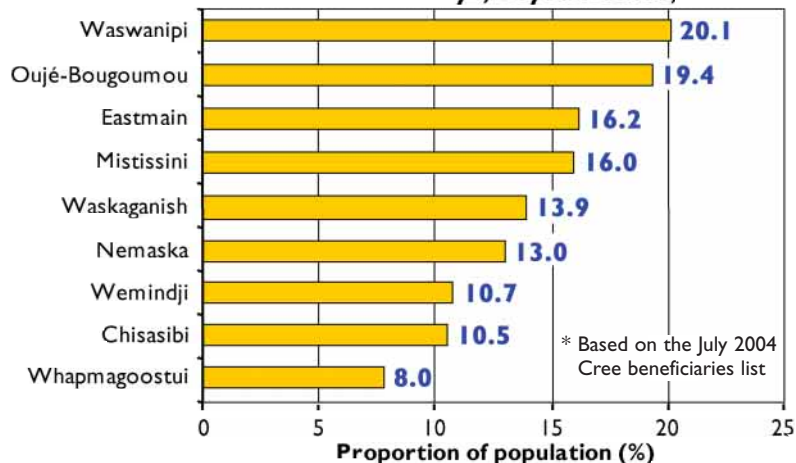
Cree community	Number of Eeyouch with diabetes aged 15+
Waswanipi	176
Oujé-Bougoumou	74
Eastmain	65
Mistissini	310
Waskaganish	168
Nemaska	54
Wemindji	90
Chisasibi	256
Whapmagoostui	38



Deaths and diabetes

Over the past 8 years (January 1996 - July 2004), 92 Eeyouch diagnosed with diabetes have died: 30 deaths were due to heart problems, 11 to kidney disease, 13 to infections, 35 to unrelated causes (mostly cancer, accidents, etc) and 3 are unknown. Almost half (46%) of the patients with diabetes died because of heart or kidney problems.

Proportion of Eeyouch (aged 15 years and over) with complications from diabetes, in each community*, Eeyou Istchee, 2004



Complications from diabetes

More than 50% of Eeyouch with diabetes already have one or more diabetes related complications. Most of these complications are at an early stage when there are often no symptoms and people feel well. That is why diabetes is called a “silent disease”.

Of the 1,232 Eeyouch with diabetes in 2004:

- 615 (49.9%) have some amount of kidney damage (nephropathy):
 - 394 (32%) • early kidney damage ("leaky kidneys")
 - 180 (14.6%) • moderate kidney damage
 - 26 (2.1%) • kidney failure (pre-dialysis)
 - 15 (1.2%) • on dialysis
- 144 (11.7%) have some eye damage (retinopathy):
 - 114 (9.3%) • mild retina damage
 - 29 (2.4%) • required laser therapy (advanced retinopathy)
 - 1 (0.1%) • documented to be blind
- 108 (8.8%) have some nerve damage (neuropathy):
 - 89 (7.2%) • mild nerve damage
 - 14 (1.1%) • diabetic ulcers in legs or feet
 - 5 (0.4%) • amputations
- 136 (11 %) have damage to blood vessels:
 - 72 (5.8%) • heart disease
 - 38 (3.1%) • stroke
 - 16 (1.3%) • poor blood flow to the feet
 - 10 (0.8%) • documented to have sexual problems (impotence)

This table may underestimate the true rate of complications from diabetes. These numbers are based on the information reported on the diabetes flow sheets in the clinics that are used to update the Cree Diabetes Information System (CDIS). As a result, complications not recorded on the flow sheets would not be included here.

Studies have clearly shown that people who keep their blood sugar, cholesterol and blood pressure at a healthy level, and live a healthy life (staying active, not smoking and eating healthy), can significantly decrease the complications from diabetes and prevent the "silent" early complications from getting worse.

How well are Eeyouch with diabetes doing?

Cholesterol and blood pressure

People with diabetes have a higher chance of having heart disease. It is very important they keep healthy blood cholesterol (fat in the blood) and blood pressure at healthy levels in order to prevent heart disease.

In 2004, 40% of the Eeyouch with diabetes achieved healthy levels for "bad" LDL-cholesterol (goal is < 2.5) compared to 31% in 2002. Furthermore, the proportion of patients who had a healthy blood pressure ($\leq 130/80$) increased from 30% in 2002 to 49% in 2004.

Are your blood cholesterol and blood pressure at a healthy level to prevent diabetes complications?



Weight control

- ◆ Keeping a healthy weight is important to control blood sugar.
- ◆ 82% of the Eeyouch diagnosed with diabetes are obese.
- ◆ Ask your clinic how to better manage your weight.

Blood sugar control

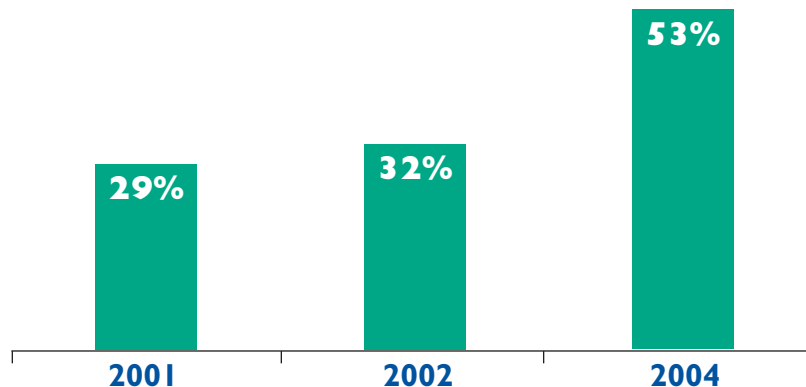
In 2004, 53% of the Eeyouch with diabetes have kept their blood sugar at healthy levels (A1c level less than 7.0%). This is a significant overall improvement, compared to 32% of Eeyouch with healthy blood sugars in 2002 and 29% in 2001.

Nevertheless, in 2004, 554 (47%) Eeyouch still have blood sugar levels that are high, and are putting themselves at higher risk for diabetes complications.

Do you know if your A1c is at a healthy level?



Each year, more Eeyouch with diabetes have succeeded in having healthy blood sugar levels (A1c < 7%)



Diabetes remains one of the most serious medical issues in Eeyou Istchee. Many Eeyouch with diabetes are being diagnosed at a young age and a large number of them have only been diagnosed in the past 5 years. However, many Eeyouch with diabetes are learning to manage their diabetes well with the help of the clinics. This will help them prevent or delay the long term complications caused by diabetes.

It is important that we all learn more about *living well with diabetes*. Learning about diabetes is one the best ways to help fight it.

