

# **Diabetes and COVID-19:** **New Data Quantifies Extraordinary Challenges Faced by Americans with Diabetes During Pandemic**

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*dQ&A - The Diabetes Research Company and the  
American Diabetes Association*



COVID-19 has compounded financial pressure on the diabetes community.

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- **24% of people with diabetes** have used savings, loans, or money from their stimulus check to pay for diabetes care in the past three months. Those on Medicare are no exception.
- **Half of those who have lost income** are using savings or stimulus money.
- People with **poor diabetes management** are leaning more on savings and stimulus money than those who have their diabetes under control.
- People with diabetes already face medical costs nearly **2.5 times higher** than those without. What happens when their savings and stimulus money run out?

Americans are rationing diabetes supplies to save money.

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- **A quarter of people with diabetes** have turned to self-rationing supplies to cut the cost of their diabetes care.
- Rationing insulin was already a problem, now made worse.
  - **650,000 insulin patients** are skipping injections or taking less insulin than prescribed.
  - **3 million people** are skipping blood glucose tests.
- Self-rationing is the opposite of the CDC's advice to people with diabetes during COVID-19. Worse still, people with high A1Cs are **more likely to ration**.
- Rationing further increases the likelihood of bad outcomes from COVID-19 in the short term – and will **drive up the cost of diabetes complications** in the long term.

COVID-19 is hitting working and low-income diabetes populations especially hard.



- In June, the unemployment rate among people with diabetes was **higher than the national rate at 18% vs. 12%**.
- Unemployment isn't the whole story. **33% of people with diabetes** who were working before COVID-19 have lost some or all income. This is higher than the general population rate at 29%.
- Two groups within the diabetes community are facing extreme impact:
  - Low-income: **half have lost some or all income.**
  - Self-employed: **7 in 10 have lost some or all income.**

Lockdowns have left much of the diabetes community largely unprotected.



- Working from home is not an option for half of the working diabetes population.
- In March, **4 in 10 working Americans with diabetes** were in jobs that could not be done from home.
- Currently, **half of employed people with diabetes** are going into work full-time or part-time.
- **60%** of these workers are in essential industries. **22%** are in healthcare.
  - **9 out of 10** are often or sometimes within six feet of others at work.
  - Only **7 in 10** are required to wear a mask at work.
- People with diabetes are helping to provide the services we all depend on during this pandemic, even as it puts their own well-being at risk.

# Methodology

- These figures are based on dQ&A's 5th (June) survey of 5,000 people with diabetes nationally since the start of the pandemic, between June 26 and July 1, 2020.
- Results are weighted to reflect the overall profile of the diabetes population by diabetes type, treatment and ethnicity.
- These numbers represent a conservative estimate of the pandemic's impact. They are generated from an ongoing online study of the diabetes population amongst people who have opted in to participate.



## **About the American Diabetes Association**

Every day more than 4,000 people are newly diagnosed with diabetes in America. More than 122 million Americans have diabetes or prediabetes and are striving to manage their lives while living with the disease. The American Diabetes Association (ADA) is the nation's leading voluntary health organization fighting to bend the curve on the diabetes epidemic and help people living with diabetes thrive. For nearly 80 years the ADA has been driving discovery and research to treat, manage and prevent diabetes, while working relentlessly for a cure. We help people with diabetes thrive by fighting for their rights and developing programs, advocacy and education designed to improve their quality of life. Diabetes has brought us together. What we do next will make us Connected for Life. To learn more or to get involved, visit us at [diabetes.org](http://diabetes.org) or call 1-800-DIABETES (1-800-342-2383). Join the fight with us on Facebook (American Diabetes Association), Twitter (@AmDiabetesAssn) and Instagram (@AmDiabetesAssn).

## **About dQ&A – The Diabetes Research Company**

dQ&A is a social enterprise that's committed to making life better for people with diabetes. We harness patient voices to help develop better tools and policies for people with diabetes and improve health outcomes. For over ten years, we have been tracking the experiences and opinions of people with diabetes in the United States, Canada and Europe. We are trusted by patients because of our independence and commitment to them. Our team has decades of experience in quantitative and qualitative research and a deep knowledge of diabetes. Many of our own lives have been touched by diabetes, so we have a personal stake in our work. To learn more and to see research highlights, you can visit us at [d-qa.com](http://d-qa.com) and follow us on LinkedIn (dQ&A - The Diabetes Research Company), Facebook (@dQandA) and Twitter (@dQAresearch).

