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*Listening, learning, and living together: it's the science of life.*

## Women and Diabetes<sup>1</sup>

*Linda Bobroff<sup>2</sup>*

Have you ever heard a busy mom or an active retired woman say, "I know I should get a check-up, but I just can't find the time?" At all ages, women are usually the primary caregivers for their families, but all too often they don't take time to take care of themselves. This can lead to serious problems, especially when a condition like diabetes is left undetected. Diabetes affects an estimated 9 million women in the U.S., and about 1 in 3 are unaware that they have the disease (United States Food and Drug Administration, 2002). Left untreated, diabetes can cause health complications such as blindness, amputations, kidney disease, and heart disease. The good news is that controlling blood sugar can decrease risk for these conditions, but women need to first be aware that they have the disease.

More women than men have diabetes, because they live longer and are more likely to be overweight. Diabetes risk increases with age, although type 2 diabetes is occurring in younger and younger people as obesity rates increase.

The Food and Drug Administration's Office of Women's Health has an educational campaign called *Take Time to Care About Diabetes* which teaches women about diabetes risk factors and warning signs, and encourages them to get tested for the disease. More information about diabetes is available at <http://www.fda.gov/womens/taketimetcare/diabetes/>. To do the best for ourselves and for our families, we all should take time to care about our health.

Listening, learning, and living together: it's the science of life. "Family Album" is

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2. Linda Bobroff, professor, Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences, Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611.

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### References

United States Food and Drug Administration. (2002). *Diabetes facts*. Retrieved May 9, 2007, from <http://www.fda.gov/womens/taketimetocare/diabetes/fswomen.html>