

**For Immediate Release**  
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Health Assessment and  
Research for Communities

## **Diabetes in the Coachella Valley: HARC Data Reveals Bittersweet Story**

**Palm Desert, CA (June 30, 2016)...** One in ten Coachella Valley adults—over 36,000 people—have been diagnosed with diabetes, according to HARC’s 2013 population health data. To intimately understand the health status and health needs of this important group, HARC, Inc. has released a special report on diabetes in the Coachella Valley. This report provides comprehensive insight into the health issues and health needs of our local population who live with diabetes.

Diabetes is an illness that causes blood glucose levels in the blood to rise higher than normal. When left untreated or not properly managed, diabetes can cause serious health problems, including heart disease, blindness, kidney failure, amputations, and premature death.

Findings from the HARC report suggest some uplifting information for local people with diabetes. People with diabetes are more likely to have health insurance and are more likely to access routine preventative health screenings, such as cholesterol screenings, eye exams, and flu vaccinations.

However, there are also major health concerns present for the 36,000 Valley residents living with diabetes. Compared to people without diabetes, they are more likely to be obese, less likely to exercise, and have higher rates of major illnesses such as cancer, heart disease, and stroke. People with diabetes are more likely to perceive they are in poor health, while those without diabetes are more likely to perceive they have excellent health.

Thousands of local people with diabetes are engaging in unhealthy behaviors such as binge drinking and cigarette smoking; which pose a severe risk for diabetic complications. Approximately 32% of people with diabetes have not taken a self-management course for their diabetes, so it may be that they do not know how risky these behaviors are.

The complete report contains additional data related to health coverage and care, behavioral risks, major diseases, and diabetes-specific information such as the regularity of hemoglobin checks and foot checks. The report also includes local and national resources that are available to adults with diabetes.

The overall aim of the report is to provide useful insight on the health of those who live with diabetes in the Coachella Valley. As such, the Special Report on Diabetes is available for free on HARC's website ([www.HARCdata.org](http://www.HARCdata.org)) in an effort to facilitate local decision-making regarding program development and program funding.

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**About HARC**

HARC, Inc. (Health Assessment and Research for Communities) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization providing research and evaluation services related to health and wellness. HARC is funded in part by grants, donations, and the consulting services they offer. HARC is located on the University of California, Riverside Palm Desert Center. More information can be obtained by calling HARC at (760) 404-1945, or visiting the organization's website at [www.HARCdata.org](http://www.HARCdata.org).