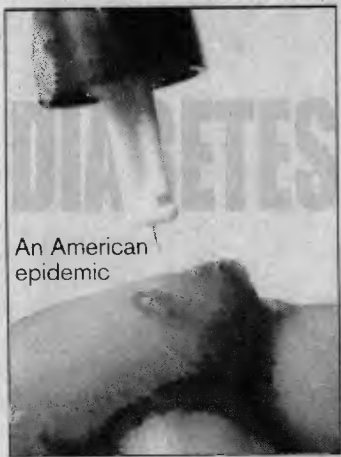


# Headed for a health crisis



An American epidemic

## EDITOR'S NOTE

This is the second day in an in-depth five-day series on diabetes.

**LEFT UNTREATED**, this disease can lead to blindness, loss of limbs and even death

BY JENNIFER WIG  
BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

**BRISTOL, Va.** — Jerry Clark used to eat two or three platefuls of food for dinner.

Even after he was diagnosed with diabetes four years ago, he continued to eat whatever he wanted.

Then, in March, his cholesterol and blood-sugar levels rose dangerously high — to more than 500.

His doctor was so worried after receiving the test results, he called Clark at 10:30 p.m. to deliver the news.

Without changes, Clark was headed for a heart attack and other serious health problems, his doctor told him.

"He said, 'What are you doing?' and I said, 'Well, nothing,' and he said, 'Precisely.' I was at the point where I had to make the change."

Even if it means cooking one meal for himself and another for his family, Clark now realizes it's crucial to eat right to control his diabetes.

See **CRISIS**, Page A5



Carol Carter, a certified diabetes educator with Wellmont Health System, looks over food labels during a shopping trip to compare foods that are good and bad for diabetics.



ANDRE TEAGUE/BRISTOL HERALD COURIER

**Brandy Schrenker**, a registered dietitian, explains a point during a nutrition class that is part of the treatment program for most diabetics.

## THE SERIES AT A GLANCE

### SUNDAY

**A quiet epidemic:** Diabetes has swept across the country in recent years. Find out how far it's spread — and what it could mean in the coming years.

**A touch of sugar:** Diabetes left untreated can lead to blindness and other complications. A look at how to manage the disease.

### TODAY

**Life with diabetes:** Glenda Ingle fights to stay healthy and manage her diabetes. A look at the benefits of TennCare.

**Hold the sugar:** Diabetes affects many things, from eating habits being one of the largest.

### TUESDAY

**The costs:** The costs of diabetes medication and treatment are a heavy burden for many. Workplaces and the economy are affected.

### WEDNESDAY

**The next generation:** Diabetes continues to affect children, not just adults. A look at the life of a diabetic child.

**Off the couch:** What schools and other groups are doing to help children manage their disease.

### THURSDAY

**Spreading the word:** Ted Blankenship wants to help others manage their diabetes. Find out how he uses laughter to cope.

**Living with diabetes:** Experts say living with diabetes is easier when you have the right education and support. A look at how to manage their disease and the research taking place to make it easier.

## DIABETES DICTIONARY

- **Ketoacidosis:** A serious condition that can lead to diabetic coma or death. It occurs when diabetics have dangerously high levels of ketones — acids that build up in the blood.
- **Insulin pump:** A programmable insulin-delivering device about the size of a deck of cards that can be worn on a belt or kept in a pocket. It connects to narrow, flexible plastic tubing that ends with a needle inserted just under the skin.
- **Glucophage:** The brand name of a medication given to some diabetics. It works by decreasing the amount of glucose produced by the liver. It also makes muscle tissue more sensitive to insulin so glucose can be absorbed.