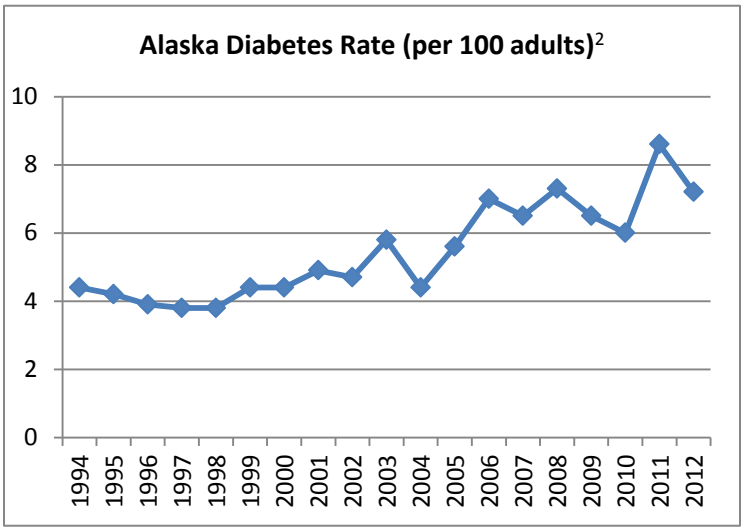
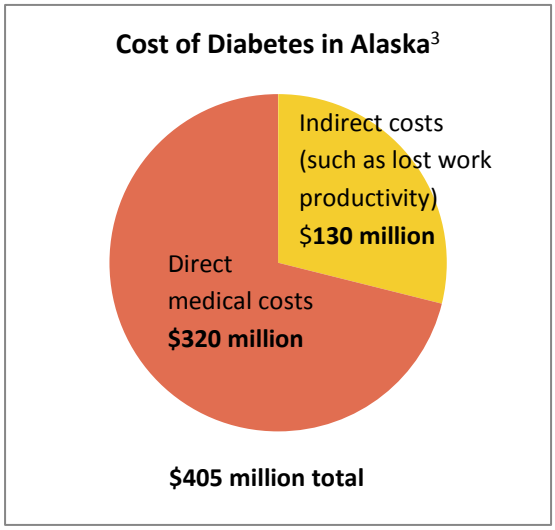
Diabetes by the Numbers: Alaska

Diabetes is currently one of the ten leading causes of death in Alaska. In 2012, **30,500** people in Alaska were estimated to have diabetes, and the disease was estimated to affect the health of 4.2 percent of the adult population.[1] Not only does diabetes cause detriment to the well-being of Alaska's citizens, but it also puts a tremendous financial burden on the state.





In 2010, 73,000 non-traumatic lower limb amputations were performed in the US due to diabetes.[4]

The average cost of each amputation is $70,434.[5]

Investing in Podiatric Care

- While diabetes is the leading cause of non-traumatic lower limb amputation, these amputations can be prevented.
- Every $1 invested in care by a podiatrist results in $27 to $51 of savings for the health-care system among patients with commercial insurance. For Medicare-eligible patients, every $1 invested in care by a podiatrist results in $9 to $13 of savings.[6]
- The inclusion of care provided by podiatrists for those with diabetes alone will save the health-care system $3.5 billion per year.[7]

Today's Podiatrist Keeps Alaska Walking

Alaska can benefit economically and medically from encouraging its diabetes patients to visit podiatrists yearly. Research shows yearly visits to a podiatrist by those with diabetes can decrease the risk of lower limb amputation by up to 80 percent.[8] For more information, visit www.apma.org/diabetes.

[1,3] Economic Costs of Diabetes in the U.S. in 2012. (2013). *Diabetes Care* 36 (2013): 1033-1046.

[2] National Diabetes Surveillance System, 2014. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[4] National Diabetes Statistics Report: Estimates of Diabetes and Its Burden in the United States, 2014. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[5] Lee C. Rogers et al., "The Right to Bear Legs—An Amendment to Healthcare: How Preventing Amputations Can Save Billions for the US Health-care System," *Journal of the American Podiatric Medical Association* 98 (2008): 166-168.

[6,7] Ginger Carls et al., "The Economic Value of Specialized Lower-Extremity Medical Care by Podiatric Physicians in the Treatment of Diabetic Foot Ulcers," *Journal of the American Podiatric Medical Association* 101 (2011): 93-115.

Diabetes by the Numbers: Alaska

[8] T.B. Gibson et al., "Podiatrist care and outcomes for patients with diabetes and foot ulcer," *International Wound Journal* 11 (2014): 641–648.