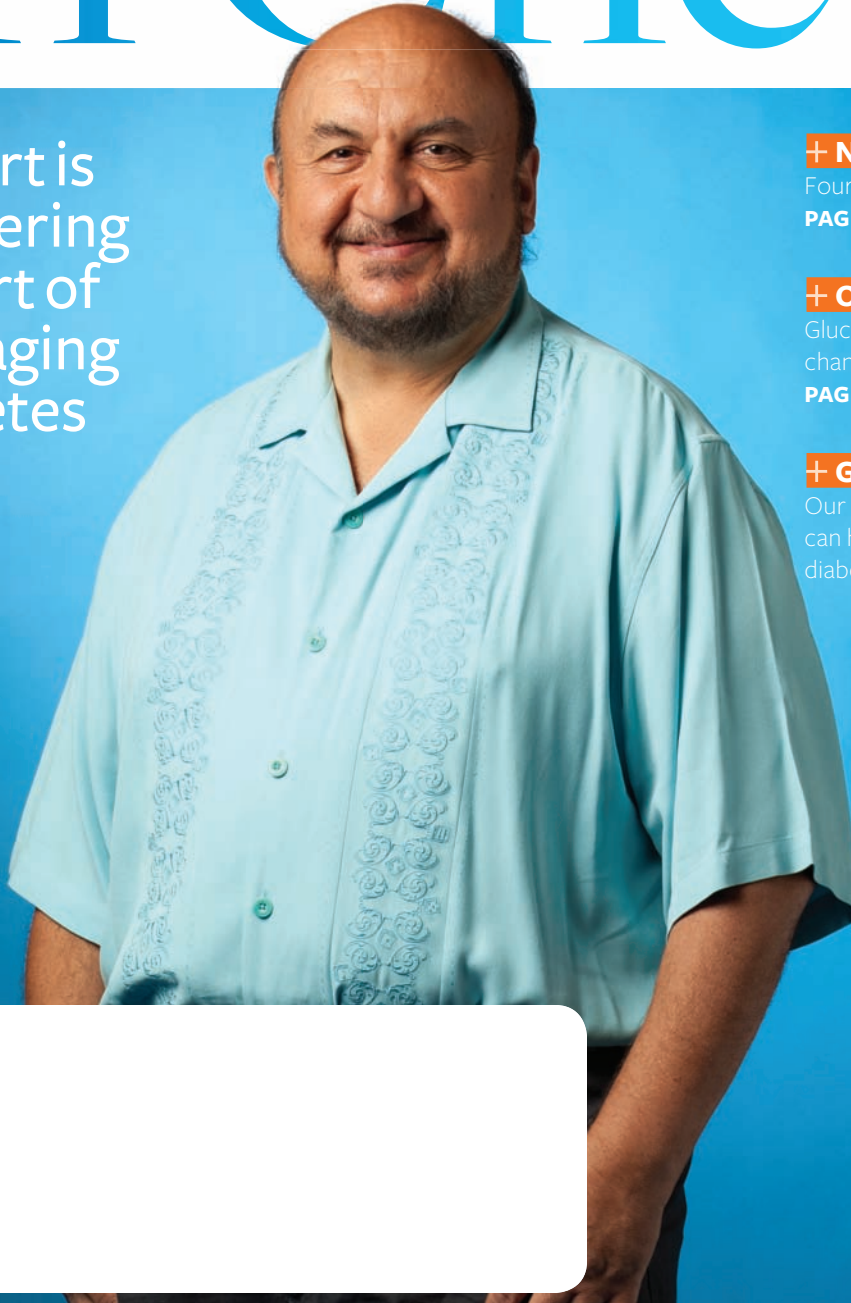


# In Check

DIABETES

OCTOBER 2011

Robert is mastering the art of managing diabetes



**+ NO COMPLICATIONS**

Four key areas to keep an eye on  
**PAGE 3**

**+ ONE-TWO PUNCH**

Glucose monitoring and lifestyle changes make a powerful pair  
**PAGE 3**

**+ GET CONNECTED**

Our Facebook community that can help you stay on track with diabetes management **PAGE 4**

# The Art of Managing Diabetes

## A visual artist paints himself a healthier future

**It's been said that art is about seeing things in a different way. Maybe that's why visual artist**

Robert Barsamian didn't hesitate to act when he discovered he had diabetes earlier this year.

Within a month of his diagnosis, Barsamian, 65, enrolled in the TEAM Self-Management Diabetes Training Program at the Ruth Collins Diabetes Center at Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas. This program covers various topics, from blood glucose management to meal planning, to teach the patient how to live healthily with diabetes.

"I understand the severity of diabetes, but I also understand it's possible to control it so you can live with it," he says. "My first instinct was to learn how to take care of myself."

### COMMITTED TO CHANGE

Kim Dickson, R.D., L.D., CDE, a certified diabetes educator at the center, says a can-do attitude like Barsamian's is half the battle. "If the person is motivated and willing to make changes in their lifestyle and they're engaged in wanting to understand the

disease, that makes a big difference."

Barsamian credits his positive outlook in part to his passion for his work: creating multimedia, three-dimensional presentations known as installation art. Constructing them helps him stay active, too. "I do a lot of physical work in building my structures; I probably don't do as much cardio as is recommended, but I'm learning to get better at that."

Barsamian started going to the gym with his wife and made healthy changes in his diet that helped him shed 30 pounds—and he's shooting for more.

### A HEALTHY APPROACH

Dickson applauds this balanced approach to managing diabetes.

"So many people come in and are fearful or in denial and feel as though everything's being taken away," she says. "Part of our job is to help them understand that it's not. They can eat what they like, but they have to watch portions, and make healthier choices and be active most of the time."

With the results he already has achieved, it's clear that Barsamian took his self-management training seriously, and is taking control of his diabetes.

"It's just another thing I need to face. As you get older, challenges are thrown at you and you can choose to lie down and let them roll over you, or you can do something."



Robert Barsamian



### An Artist's Perspective

Want to learn more about Robert's diabetes story? Hear him tell it in his own words online at [BaylorHealth.com/DallasDiabetes](http://BaylorHealth.com/DallasDiabetes).

**KNOW  
YOUR**  
*numbers*

26.9

The percentage of Americans ages 65 and older who have diabetes.

1.9M

The number of Americans ages 20 and older who were diagnosed with diabetes in 2010.

2-4x

The increased risk of having a stroke or dying from heart disease for adults with diabetes versus those without it.

10-15

The minimum number of pounds to lose in order to reduce your risk of diabetes.



# A Dynamic Duo

## Two keys to effectively managing your diabetes

**Successfully managing your diabetes takes dedication on many levels.** But monitoring blood sugar levels—and making healthy lifestyle changes to help keep those levels in control—are job one. Alok Mohan, M.D., an endocrinologist on the medical staff at Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas, shares his thoughts on keeping your diabetes in check by focusing on both.

### 1. READ YOUR METER

Thanks to today's advanced technology in glucose meters, monitoring is a snap. But this wasn't always the case, Dr. Mohan says.

"Just five to 10 years ago, only physicians and medical laboratories had these testing meters, and they were big, bulky and required a lot of blood. Now we have glucometers that are smaller, lighter, faster, easier and more reliable, and patients can do it themselves."

Like any other tool, glucose meters require proper use to work effectively.

This means following user instructions—such as not reusing or sharing meters, or using an outdated test strip—as well as following the guidance of your physician.

"Be aware of what time of day in relation to meals that you're checking your blood sugar and be consistent to ensure accurate measurements over time," Dr. Mohan says.

### 2. FORM HEALTHY HABITS

Healthy lifestyle habits make sense for everyone, but they're even more critical for people who have diabetes.

"Medications are important, but will never be enough acting alone. Lifestyle changes are first and foremost," Dr. Mohan says.

He recommends working with your physician or a certified diabetes educator to develop an exercise program to help with weight loss as well as medical nutrition therapy to manage your carbohydrate and calorie intake.



## Self-Management 101

Learn to manage your blood sugar levels and change your habits in the self-management training classes at Ruth Collins Diabetes Center. Please visit [BaylorHealth.com/DallasDiabetes](http://BaylorHealth.com/DallasDiabetes) or call 1-800-4BAYLOR.

## PREVENTING DIABETES COMPLICATIONS

Uncontrolled diabetes can cause a range of health problems, from itchy skin and rashes to more serious conditions such as kidney failure and nerve damage.

Managing diabetes begins with keeping your blood sugar in check, but there's more to it than that, says Ginny Ives, R.D., a certified diabetes educator at the Ruth Collins Diabetes Center at Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas. Here are four other areas of the body that need attention to help prevent complications.

**Eyes.** Individuals who have diabetes are more likely to develop glaucoma and cataracts. "To protect your vision, schedule an eye exam annually with an ophthalmologist," Ives says.

**Feet.** Because neuropathy, a condition in which nerves are damaged, causes loss of feeling in your feet and can lead to foot ulcers and other concerns, "it's important to check your feet daily and have a complete foot exam by a physician at least [once] every year," Ives says.

**Heart.** "Uncontrolled diabetes harms your heart by causing arteries to clog much more quickly," Ives says. Keep your heart healthy by keeping blood sugar and blood pressure under control, and cholesterol levels within a healthy range.

**Kidneys.** Your physician can perform a test to detect early kidney damage from uncontrolled diabetes. "The test is called a urine microalbumin and it should be given at least once a year, if not quarterly," Ives says. If kidney damage continues, it can lead to kidney failure in which more serious treatment such as dialysis or transplant is needed.



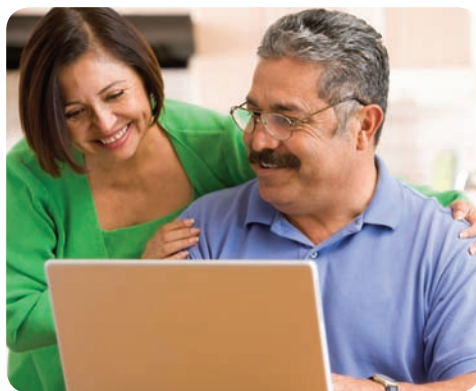
## Educate Yourself

Find more information on complications of diabetes online at [BaylorHealth.com/DallasDiabetes](http://BaylorHealth.com/DallasDiabetes).

# Connect with a Community

## Get support from the comfort of your own home

Living with diabetes can leave you feeling isolated at times, but you don't have to face it alone. There are plenty of individuals experiencing the same struggles. With the Ruth Collins Diabetes Center's new Facebook group, called Diabetes Dialogue, you can get support from a community of educators and individuals like you.



### WHAT TO EXPECT

"It's another way for us to stay connected with the people in our training programs and support groups, and others who may be thinking about joining one," says Kim Dickson, R.D., L.D., CDE, a certified diabetes educator at the Ruth Collins Diabetes Center and administrator for the new Diabetes Dialogue group. "Our educators post news and information, people can ask questions, and individuals who've been part of our self-management training can share their stories."

## MAKING SELF-MANAGEMENT MORE AFFORDABLE

For individuals newly diagnosed with diabetes, learning to live with and effectively manage their condition can be challenging. The Ruth Collins Diabetes Center makes it easier by providing comprehensive training to help patients improve their health and avoid complications from diabetes. And three self-management classes at Ruth Collins are now available at a lower price, making diabetes training more affordable than ever.

**TEAM diabetes self-management training.** These group classes, offered in a group setting or one-on-one, help individuals with type 2 diabetes learn what they need to know to control it. "The program covers everything from diet and medications to exercise, blood sugar testing and even eating out," says Ginny Ives, R.D., CDE, a certified diabetes educator at the Ruth Collins Diabetes Center. The TEAM program is also recognized by the American

Diabetes Association as meeting national quality standards for self-management education.

### Diabetes during pregnancy.

Gestational diabetes is a form of diabetes that is first diagnosed during pregnancy. "This program teaches pregnant women with gestational diabetes how to keep it under control to protect their health and the health of their baby," Ives says.

**Diabetes medication management.** If your diabetes can't be controlled through lifestyle changes or oral medications, insulin or other injectable medications may be needed. This class teaches you how to use them.

If you have diabetes, take charge of managing it properly. Ask your physician for a referral to the Ruth Collins Diabetes Center at Baylor Dallas. For more information about these and other classes at the Ruth Collins Diabetes Center, call **214-820-8988**.



## Join the Conversation

Be part of the Facebook group and share your experiences, learn from others with diabetes or just get a better feel for what the Ruth Collins Diabetes Center is all about. Find them at [Facebook.com/groups/DiabetesDialogue](https://www.facebook.com/groups/DiabetesDialogue) and get connected.

## DON'T MISS OUR DIABETES DIALOGUE SEMINAR

November is National Diabetes Awareness Month and the Ruth Collins Diabetes Center at Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas is hosting a free seminar for individuals with diabetes and those at risk. Attend and learn what diabetes really means for your health and how to lower your risk of developing type 2 diabetes and related conditions. Diabetes-friendly finger foods and refreshments will be served.

### DIABETES DIALOGUE

**When:** Thursday, Nov. 10

**Where:** Sammons Cancer Center at Baylor Dallas  
10th floor Hunt Auditorium  
3410 Worth St.  
Dallas, TX 75246

### SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

**6-7 p.m.** The Story of an A1C Champion  
**7-7:45 p.m.** Presentation by Maryam Zamanian, M.D., endocrinologist on the medical staff at Baylor Dallas  
**7:45-8 p.m.** Q & A with an expert panel



## Reserve Your Spot

To attend the Diabetes Dialogue seminar, visit [BaylorHealth.com/DallasEvents](https://www.BaylorHealth.com/DallasEvents) or call **1-800-4BAYLOR**.

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