

## Diabetes Awareness Month

Welcome to November! November is Diabetes Awareness Month. Dr. Stryer and myself always mention the impact of chronic disease in our keynotes and presentations, with particular emphasis on diabetes. Why? Let's run the numbers.

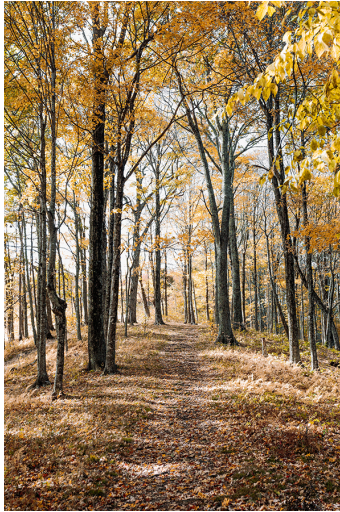
According to the [CDC](#), greater than 37,000,000 Americans, more than 1 out of 10, suffer from diabetes, with 20% of them unaware of their diagnosis. Diabetes continues to be in the top 10 causes of death in the US, and the leading cause of kidney failure, lower-limb amputations, and adult blindness. Even more troubling is that in the last two decades, the number of adults diagnosed with diabetes has more than doubled. And, historically excluded populations fare even worse given their barriers to healthcare, poverty, and racist policies.



Fortunately, we can do something about preventing diabetes, reversing pre-diabetes, and ameliorating its mal effects, not just by altering diet, but by moving more! The [benefits of regular physical activity](#) go beyond diabetes, and include a reduction in risk of developing heart disease, cancer, hypertension, osteoporosis, and obesity. And, we also know that [spending time outdoors](#) in green space increases the likelihood of physical activity.

As far back as 2013, in [a study of 267,072 Australian adults](#), Astell-Burt et al showed that people living in greener surroundings have a lower risk of type II

Diabetes. In a more recent prospective cohort study (N=6814) published in 2022, [Doubleday et al](#) found that "neighborhood greenspace provides a protective influence in the development of diabetes." Additionally, De la Fuente et. al. showed through a [systematic review](#) published in 2021, that people and communities exposed to nearby green spaces may benefit from a reduction in the risk of type II diabetes and obesity, as well as an increased probability of being more physically active.



To summarize:

1. Physical activity is good for preventing diabetes, reversing pre-diabetes, and ameliorating the mal effects of diabetes.
2. Being in greenspace or nature-rich areas increases physical activity.
3. Issuing nature prescriptions creates opportunities for our patients to be active and reduce their risk of diabetes

## Spotlight of the Month

We'd like to take a moment to recognize [Campus Nature Rx Network \(CNRx\)](#), co-founded by **Drs. Dorothy Ibes and Don Rakow.**



**Dr. Dorothy Ibes**, William & Mary

Dr. Dorothy Ibes has been faculty in William & Mary's Environment & Sustainability program since 2013. Dorothy is also the founder and director of the Parks & Ecotherapy Research Lab (PERL, Est.



2009), a certified ecotherapy guide, and co-director of the [Campus Nature Rx Network](#).

A human-environment geographer, Dorothy's research, teaching, outreach, and ecotherapy work explores mutually-beneficial human-nature relationships, with a focus on promoting mental health and environmental stewardship through nature engagement.

Her use-inspired, interdisciplinary teaching and research integrates theory and practice from nature and health, ecopsychology, ecotherapy, environmental psychology, human-environment geography, environmental justice, and urban park planning.



**Dr. Don Rakow**, Cornell University

Dr. Don Rakow has been a member of the Cornell faculty since 1987. Don is an associate professor in the Section of Horticulture in Cornell University's School of Integrative Plant Science. Don served as the Elizabeth Newman Wilds Director of Cornell Botanic Gardens (formerly Cornell Plantations) from 1996 - 2013, and as Plantations' associate director from 1993 to 1995.

With Dorothy, Don is co-director of the [Campus Nature Rx Network](#). He continues to be actively involved in teaching, research, and undergraduate and graduate advising. Don created and co-directs the Cornell Graduate Program in Public Garden Leadership.

Don's research includes a focus on the impact of time in nature on human health and behavior. Don is also the co-author of [Nature Rx: Improving](#)

## ABOUT CNRx:

[Campus Nature Rx Network](#) (CNRx) is committed to engaging the student with the natural world. CNRx holds the core belief that a healthy college or university campus should foster students' mental and physical well-being as much as their intellectual development. Dorothy and Don founded CNRx in 2019 as a small consortium of only four member institutions that has grown to 60 universities, colleges, and other institutions. CNRx provides members with monthly newsletters, an annual virtual symposium, and opportunities to collaborate on the development of new programs. Currently under development is a Nature Rx Academy Certification Program, and a series of instructional videos.



**For those interested in learning more or in becoming a CNRx member institution, please [contact Dorothy or Don.](#)**

## Provider Stories

We want to hear from you! With over 1,700 registered providers across the country, we know there are a lot of stories out there of prescribing nature for the first time and patient successes. Take a moment to [Share Your Story](#) and get a chance to be showcased on our [Provider Spotlight](#) page, with your permission of course.

**[Share Your Story](#)**

# Help Support PRA

PRA is grateful for your donation to help us keep our website and platform accessible to all!

[Make a Donation](#)

Park Rx America is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. All donations are tax deductible. Our EIN is 82-0856734.

*Keeping in mind the secondary trauma of caring for others, please take the time you need to recover and consider a dose of nature for yourself.*

**Robert Zarr, MD, MPH**  
*Founder & Medical Director*

**Stacy Beller Stryer, MD**  
*Associate Medical Director*

**PRA** *nature prescribed*

Sent with  
**Brevo**