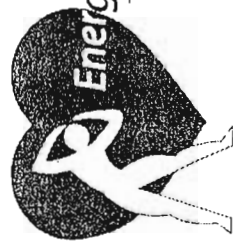


Helping employees manage their diabetes

Employees in on-site disease management SESSIONS

By Bob Miller



Energize Your Life
The power to generate a healthier you.

A recent company wellness effort is helping employees with diabetes help themselves. Twenty Ameren employees with diabetes volunteered to take part in a pilot program to help them better manage



"Once you're diagnosed with a disease, it sure motivates you to make healthy choices."

— **Patsy DeNoyer**

their disease. Each Monday, for 12 weeks, the group attended a lunchtime presentation given by the St. Louis Diabetes Coalition and funded by Ameren. The seminars focused on

says **Patsy DeNoyer**, training clerk, security and planning, Ameren Service Center. DeNoyer was diagnosed with type two diabetes early in 2006 and attended the seminars. "I thought the professional counseling was great, as well as the emotional support of co-workers in the same situation."

Diabetes is a disease where the body does not correctly process insulin. Insulin is a hormone that converts sugar and starches into energy. The disease can severely damage the feet, kidneys, eyes and heart. Although the cause of diabetes is still unknown, type one diabetes is thought to be genetic and appears early in life. Type two diabetes usually occurs in middle age and is thought to be caused by a lack of exercise and a diet rich in sugar. According to the American Diabetes Association, some 20 million Americans have the disease and one third of them are unaware of the

Diabetes@Work Program Ameren

An article from Ameren's employee newsletter
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The good news is that the disease can be controlled with medication, diet and exercise. The lunchtime presentations gave employees the latest news in diabetes care and offered emotional support for exercising and maintaining a healthy diet. "When you slip into negative habits you don't notice the drain on your energy," says DeNoyer. "But since my diagnosis, I lost 50 pounds and have kept it off for six months and it's wonderful how much better I feel."

"It's easy to see how many of us worry about our health, but still do things that can have a negative impact on our physical well being," says **Lisa Roseland**, supervisor, Health and Welfare. "We are starting Ameren's wellness focus by encouraging and supporting our employees in making healthy choices around their diet, exercise and annual physicals. These are simple things that can make big differences in our quality of life." Ameren is hoping to expand the number and locations of diabetes screening and seminars in the future. That decision will be based, in part, on follow up reviews conducted later this year with session participants to evaluate the results. •