Special Diabetes Program for Indians:

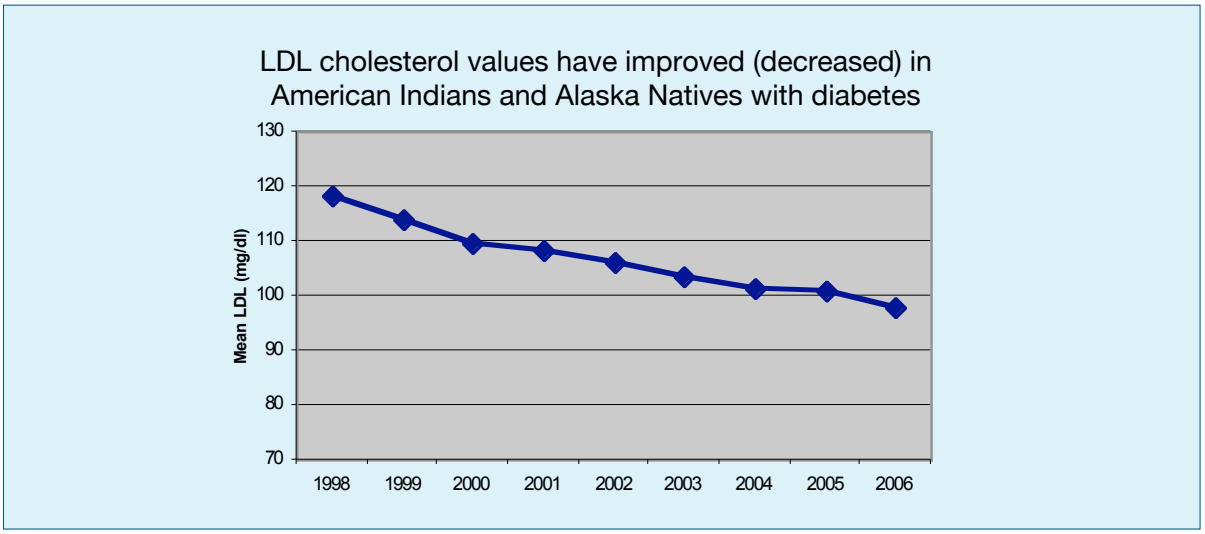
Reducing the Risk of Cardiovascular Disease

The *Special Diabetes Program for Indians* has helped American Indian and Alaska Native communities implement activities known to reduce cardiovascular disease risk.

- Since 1998, the use of aspirin or other appropriate therapy in American Indians and Alaska Natives with diabetes has increased each year. **Aspirin use in people with diabetes aged 30 or older has more than doubled** from 30% in 1999 to 69% in 2006.

- The **rate of LDL cholesterol screening has more than doubled** (33% in 1998 to 71% in 2006).

- The **mean LDL cholesterol ("bad" cholesterol) decreased 17%** from 118 mg/dl in 1998 to 98 mg/dl in 2006, surpassing the treatment goal of less than 100 mg/dl for people with diabetes.



Source: Indian Health Service Diabetes Care and Outcomes Audit

Why is this important?

- People with diabetes are at increased risk for cardiovascular disease, the number one killer of American Indian and Alaska Native adults.
- Research has shown that lowering cholesterol may help significantly reduce the chance of developing cardiovascular complications associated with diabetes, such as heart attack, stroke, or heart failure.
- People with diabetes are at increased risk of forming blood clots, which may break off and cause cardiovascular events, such as heart attacks and strokes. Regular aspirin use significantly reduces cardiovascular events in people with diabetes by helping prevent red blood cells from forming blood clots.

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Department of Health and Human Services
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http://www.ihs.gov/medicalprograms/diabetes/