

Christina Park: A crisis could be on the rise for insulin dependant diabetic patients.

Dari Alexander: Linda Schmit is here to tell us how the price of a life-saving drug was skyrocketing in recent years. Linda.

Linda Schmit: Yeah. Well, Dari and Christina, remember this past summer, we we're doing stories about the EpiPen and the skyrocketing prices for them, going up by \$500? Well now, a lot of people in this country are concerned the same thing is happening with the price of insulin. Insulin; a drug that some diabetics need in order to survive.

Reporter: Edith Prentice has Type 1 diabetes and needs to take insulin several times a day.

Edith Prentice: If I didn't take insulin, I would be dead.

Reporter: Edith is concerned because the price of many insulin brands have risen as much as \$200 in the last 3 years and she says; so has her copay.

Edith Prentice: My co-pay was 80- \$85 in 2015, in 2016 it had gone up to a hundred and thirty-eight.

Reporter 3: That's \$138 copay per bottle and even Edith says she needs eight of these bottles each month. Medical experts say diabetes is an epidemic here in the U.S. affecting about 29 million people. For them, insulin is not a luxury. It's a necessity to stay alive, but the price of the vital medication is continuing to rise.

Dr. Sood: It concerns me deeply, as a doctor.

Reporter: Dr. Manisha Sood is the director of inpatient diabetes at Lenox Hill Hospital.

Dr. Sood: I see patients actually stretching out their insulin supply. You know, and that concerns me a lot. They can they may not be using the full amount of insulin that they're prescribed.

Reporter: Dr. Sood says the issue of rising insulin prices is complicated and should be under the spotlight.

Dr. Sood: A piece just like you're doing right now is going to raise awareness. Raise awareness that this is a major problem. It's a major problem for patients, for doctors, and with diabetes growing in terms of, you know, reaching epidemic proportions; we really need to get a handle on it.

Linda Schmit: And Dr. Sood also recommends that diabetic patients talk to their doctors first about all their insulin options, and make sure to let your doctors know if you are having difficulty paying for that insulin because again, Dari and Christina; it is a lifesaver.

