Terms to Know: Incidence and Prevalence

Incidence

Incidence is the rate of newly diagnosed cases of the disease or condition per a given time measurement.

Prevalence

Prevalence is the rate of a disease or condition within the population. That is, it is the fraction of the entire population with the disease/condition at a given point in time. Prevalence continues to increase in a population until the mortality rate reaches or exceeds the incidence rate.

Example: The ADA reports that 29.1 million, or 9.3% of, Americans have diabetes. It’s estimated that 1.4 million Americans are diagnosed each year.¹

In this example, 29.1 million (9.3%) is the prevalence of diabetes in the U.S., and 1.4 million new diagnoses per year is the incidence of diabetes in the U.S.

¹ http://www.diabetes.org/diabetes-basics/statistics/