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Take Charge of the Present, Protect Your Future



What do the phrases above have in common, you may ask. They are all related to a disease that we all know of but rarely understand the full consequence of – Diabetes. With World Diabetes Day around the corner, let us shed some light on this common disease in this issue of K Bytes and bring to you some lesser-known facts about diabetes!

1) Older people are not the only ones to get diabetes

There are three main types of diabetes:

- **Insulin Dependent Diabetes Mellitus or Type 1** typically occurs in children. The pancreas produces little or no insulin, and sufferers are usually treated with daily insulin injection.
- **Non-Insulin Dependent Diabetes Mellitus or Type 2** typically occurs in persons over 40 years old. The pancreas produces insulin but the body is unable to utilise it properly. Sufferers of type 2 diabetes can often initially manage their condition through exercise and diet. However, over time most people will require oral drugs and or insulin.
- **Gestational Diabetes (GDM)** is a form of diabetes consisting of high blood glucose levels during pregnancy. While GDM usually disappears after pregnancy, women with GDM and their children are at an increased risk of developing type 2 diabetes later in life.



2) Eating too much sugar does not directly cause diabetes; your lifestyle does

Type 1 diabetes is caused by genetics and unknown factors that trigger the onset of the disease; type 2 diabetes is caused by genetics and lifestyle factors.

While diabetes can affect people of any age and race, there are some risk factors to take into consideration, such as being overweight, having an unhealthy diet, physical inactivity, having a family history of diabetes, high blood pressure, ethnicity and more.

Health is the best gift one can receive so start leading a healthier lifestyle today!

3) Having sugar in the urine is not the only indicator of diabetes

Different individuals may experience different signs and symptoms of diabetes. At times, there may even be no signs at all! As a general guide, here are some commonly experienced symptoms of diabetes:



- Frequent urination
- Excessive thirst
- Increased hunger
- Weight loss
- Tiredness
- Tingling sensation or numbness in the hands or feet
- Slow healing wounds
- Blurred vision
- Frequent infections
- Vomiting and stomach pain (often mistaken as the flu)

Practice constant vigilance and consult a health care professional if you experience any of the above symptoms.

4) There is no such thing as mild diabetes

Although diabetes ranks only #10 on the Top 10 Principal Causes of Death list in 2011*, people with diabetes have either an increased risk of developing a number of serious health problems such as heart disease, stroke, blindness and gangrene. Illnesses such as infections are also more severe if diabetes is not well controlled.

5) Diabetes does not go away

While diabetes can be treated with insulin, it does not actually cure the disease. Type 1 diabetes cannot be prevented but the onset of type 2 diabetes amongst high-risk adults may be prevented or delayed with some adjustments to your lifestyle, such as changing your diet and increasing your physical activity. Diabetes complications can be delayed or prevented by maintaining blood glucose levels, blood pressure and cholesterol at or close to the normal range.

The KDF Research Fund

At present, there is no cure for diabetes but a cure may be in sight in the near future, with 'Gene and Cell Therapy of Diabetes Mellitus', a research project at the NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine. Supported by KDF as part of its secondary mission, the project aims to find an eventual cure for diabetes and in turn, drastically reduce the instances of kidney failure and the need for dialysis. The team is seeking new approaches to the treatment of diabetes through identifying ways in which cells can regenerate and produce insulin naturally.

Diabetes mellitus is now of epidemiologic proportion universally. KDF is targeting this major health problem and through the KDF-NUS Research Fund, we are seeking a cure for diabetes. The successful completions of this will be a major contribution to medicine and humanity.

Join KDF in our journey and be a part of this groundbreaking cause by making a contribution [here](#). You may also visit the link for more information about the KDF Research Fund and latest research progress.

Remember, we can all play our part and combat diabetes by taking control of our present and protecting our future. KDF has taken our first step, now what about you?

Please note this article is for informational purposes and should only be used as a guide. The article is not intended to replace a one-on-one relationship with a qualified health care professional. It is intended as a sharing of knowledge and information with the general public.

Source:

[International Diabetes Federation](#)

[Diabetic Society of Singapore](#)

KDF Health Brochure - [Diabetes and Kidney Disease](#)

*Statistics taken from [Singapore Health Facts: Principal Causes of Death](#)