



Organisation for and from People with Disabilities South Africa

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NEWSLETTER

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DIABETIC

In SA, an estimated 4 million people suffer from diabetes and many don't even know they are at risk. This is especially true in the rural areas, where people don't often go to a doctor and clinics don't test people on a regularly basis. Symptoms of diabetes include obesity, blurry vision, constantly feeling hungry even though you are eating, extreme fatigue and tingling or numbness in the hands and/or feet, amongst others. Many people are not aware that these are the symptoms. Others are too scared to face the possibility that they are suffering from diabetes, because of the many rumours about this disease. Instead of consulting a medical practitioner, they choose to talk to a friend or neighbour about it. The problem is, that these people are not medically trained and pass on misinformation.



If you treat this disease in the right way, then there is no risk, that you are going to die from it. But then both, the doctor and yourself must do everything that is possible to keep you in a good condition and good health. For

instance; it doesn't help you if you are drinking tablets and don't control your diet. There are several rules that have to be followed, to enable a normal long and happy life.

Stay away from pasta's, bread and carbohydrates, as much as possible. But don't cut it totally out of your diet, choose fresh vegetables instead.

Stay away from alcohol as much as possible. Alcohol is based on sugar and often your body is making sugar from the

Mission:
To create equal opportunities, through awareness and access to all kind of facilities to realise that all persons can participate in a barrier free society.

Vision:
People must function in full dignity and independently and with respect in the community.

We can only do this from 'own experience and knowledge and the expertise of our members.

If someone wants to receive these newsletters directly by email, please send us an email with the subject "Newsletter".

You are allowed to copy the newsletter as many times you want.

The OPD is not only for people who are in need of a wheelchair. We advise also on accessibility and other issues regarding all

In this number:

- ◆ Diabetic type II
- ◆ Good food
- ◆ Carbohydrate
- ◆ Start with oats
- ◆ Salt
- ◆ Drinks
- ◆ Losing weight
- ◆ Hypo
- ◆ Prevention of losing legs

alcohol and then the tablet or injections doesn't help any more.

The last good advice that we can give is; eat a small portion of food at least 6-7 times a day. This will help keep your blood sugar at an even level, throughout the day. For instance; eat oats in the morning. Then around eleven o'clock you can have a piece of fruit and have lunch at one o'clock. Eat something small at 4 o'clock and after 6 a bigger portion.

Sometimes you also can have a nice piece of tart, cake or something you like, restrict this to a small portion and only once a week. Remember, this is not a punishment diet, it's a healthy lifestyle, that all should follow.



There are special diabetic sisters in the clinics who can advise you and help you to manage this disease.

HEALTHY FOOD

When you eat healthy food you naturally feel much better and there is no high risk of heart-, kidneys- and vein disease. Healthy eating promotes a healthy lifestyle, especially for people who are diabetic.

Many of the foods we eat, the body processes into blood sugar. Blood sugar

We are looking for help for:

- Visit people at home,
- Get people to the clinics/hospital,
- To do admin work,
- Money to get so the organisation get going on,
- Maintain wheelchairs etc..

gives you energy to live. Normally your body keeps the blood sugars at a normal level, but with a diabetic person, the body doesn't do that in the right way. To help the body to work properly, you need to exercise daily (moving a lot), eat a healthy diet and take corrective medicines.

CARBOHYDRATES

Carbohydrates are in many foods and from this the body makes sugars. Food such as; bread, potatoes, rice, pasta, milk, fruit, fruit juice, sweets, cakes, chips etc., all contain carbohydrates. You are allowed to eat a small amount of these products, so that your body doesn't overproduce sugars. If you eat whole grain bread, vegetables, peas, beans and fruit you will be introducing just enough natural sugar that your body can handle.

START THE DAY WITH OATS

Breakfast is the most important meal for

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For more information:

Phone: 0761452681

every day. Don't skip breakfast. The best what you can do is to start the day with oats.

Oats gives you slow released energy for hours and keeps the blood sugars low. It also gives you extra health benefits for prevention of other diseases.

Put some peanut butter and cinnamon in your oats, which gives you extra vitamins and boosts your immune system.



SALT

Many diabetics also struggle with high blood pressure. Too much salt in

your diet, pushes up your blood pressure. This is why diabetic persons have to use less salt. But food without salt is not always tasty. Use spices instead of salt. Healthy spice is much better than salt for everybody. Use more fresh parsley, green pepper powder, ginger and other herbs and spices.

Stay away from salty snacks, chips, fast food and soup in a tin. There is far too much salt in these items.

DRINKS

The best is to stay away from any alcohol. At best, one glass of red wine a day is max. Alcohol can drop your blood sugar levels too low. When your blood sugar levels drop too much, it can be dangerous.

The best drink is black or green tea. Drink 3-5 cups (without sugar) a day, this also helps to prevent strokes, high blood pressure and keeps the blood sugar level low. Avoid drinking too much coffee. Two cups a day is more than enough and only

drink filter coffee. Coffee is said to be good for the cholesterol but makes the blood sugar level higher.

LOSING WEIGHT

It is not easy to lose weight when you on diabetic medicines. Unfortunately many medicines for people with diabetes is bad for your weight. But not taking this medicines is not an option. You must take the tablet and also try to lose weight. It is possible, not easy but you can do it.

Some tips;

- Eat smaller portions food
- Eat many vegetables
- Eat whole wheat
- Eat lean meat
- Don't eat snacks
- Don't drink cool drinks
- Don't drink alcohol
- Don't eat sweets or cake
- Move more than 60 minutes a day (do it 3x20 minutes a day)

Don't forget to tell your doctor that you are going to try to lose weight. This is important, you have to be tested more frequently and he may have to change your medicines.

HYP

When your blood sugar level has dropped and is too low takes some biscuits, or a little bit of sugar, or even a glass of coca cola. You need to raise your sugar level as quickly as possible, to avoid damaging your health. Normal food intake doesn't help you raise the level as soon as possible.

Remember maintaining an even blood sugar level is the key. Extreme highs and extreme lows should be kept to a minimum. You will learn to listen to your

body and react to the symptoms to avoid these spikes.

PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE:

Many diabetics are afraid of losing their legs. This is not always a given result.

When the doctor tells you that you are diabetic, you can do many things to keep yourself healthy and prevent limb loss.

- Eat less sugar and healthy food (see above).
- Your blood sugar level must be between the 4 and 6. You have to test that on a regular basis. If it is higher than 6.9 then you need to take medicines. When you start with taking medicines you have to test the blood again after two weeks. If it is still not lower you have to see the doctor again and need other or more tablets. Don't play with it. When your blood sugar level goes down, you have to test your blood again after two months. Often we see, in the clinic books that the blood sugar level is 11 or even higher and that the person had that test 2 months ago. We send them immediately to the clinic again, because it is dangerous. Many times we hear that the sister of the clinic told them that the person must take their medicines etc., and don't test

again. We tell this person that they have to demand to be tested as soon as possible and have to get other medicines.

- Let another person check your feet regularly. Do foot rotation exercises when sitting in front of the TV or lying down, to stimulate circulation and the nerves.
- Wear comfortable shoes that don't create blisters or sores. If you have a wound on your feet, go to the doctor as soon as possible, especially if the wound is not healing in a normal way. If the sister or doctor don't take it seriously you have to tell them you are diabetic and they have to test your blood. If you don't take care of this wound, the infection will spread and you are then in danger of losing your leg or part thereof.
- If you are unfortunate and suffer limb loss. It becomes even more important to take care of yourself. You will need to increase the regularity of blood tests and be even more aware of any wounds, no matter how small. The medicines you take will have to be monitored much more carefully as well.

It is amazing that in other countries of the world there are more people with diabetes, but less people who are losing their limbs. Doctors can only help so much. The real responsibility for your health lies with YOU. And when you work together with the doctor and eat healthy food, less sugar and take the right medicines, you can have a long and fruitful life.

INCOME AND TAX ACCOUNTING

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