

Living Well with AIMGA

VOL. 11 - DIABETES



OVERVIEW

Diabetes is a chronic health condition that affects how the body transforms food into energy. Globally, one in ten adults have diabetes (90% with Type 2), and close to half of these cases are not yet diagnosed. November 14th marks World Diabetes Day, which is a campaign that promotes diabetes advocacy efforts and the importance of taking actions to confront diabetes as a global health crisis. The theme for World Diabetes Day 2023 is Access to Diabetes Care, with a focus on delaying or preventing type 2 diabetes and diabetes-related complications, with the slogan “Know your risk, Know your response.” Knowing your risk and what to do is important to help with prevention. Do your part and read more about diabetes prevention and treatment through Volume 11 of the LWVA newsletter!

Sources: [CDC, 2023](#); [International Diabetes Federation, 2023](#); [World Health Organization, 2023](#)



HEALTH REMINDERS!

- Though there is no cure for diabetes, research shows that managing your diabetes through medication, [diet](#), and exercise can help you avoid additional health complications or worsening of symptoms. Try out these habits today to maintain a positive and healthy lifestyle:
- Visit our dentist regularly and take care of your teeth and gums by brushing, flossing, and using antiseptic mouthwash to prevent gum disease and tooth loss.
- To prevent kidney failure, which can result from diabetes, there are drugs available that can lower blood sugars and blood pressure. Maintaining this can [cut your risk](#) of kidney failure by over 30%!
- Make sure to get regular eye exams from a local optometrist, as timely treatment of issues can prevent up to 90% of diabetes-related blindness. Consult your optometrist if you notice warning signs in your vision, including blurriness.
- Drew Harrisberg, a diabetic himself, highlights [The Five Pillars](#), which he encourages embodying to achieve a “balanced daily dose so that you can live your best life.” These pillars include exercise, nutrition, daily living, mindfulness, and insulin and blood glucose control. Watch his TedTalk [here](#).
- Good day-to-day [prevention](#) can prevent a diabetic coma. It is also important for diabetics to wear a medical identification bracelet or necklace in case of an emergency to let others know of your condition.

RED FLAGS

- 1 If you experience the following **warning signs** or [symptoms](#), please check in with your doctor and get your blood sugar tested: frequent urination, extreme hunger or thirst, more infections than normal, blurry vision, weight changes, feeling very tired, frequent or recurring infections, or slow healing cuts and bruises.
- 2 Currently, [11 million Canadians](#) are living with diabetes or prediabetes. Untreated or unmanaged prediabetes (reflected by warning signs above) can lead to type 2 diabetes.
- 3 **Prediabetes** causes and [risk factors](#) include: age 45+; overweight or obese; eating a lot of red and processed meat; drinking sugary beverages; not eating fruit, vegetables, nuts, or whole grains; Black, Native American, Latino, or Pacific Islander descent; have high cholesterol, sedentary behaviour, sleep disturbances (e.g., sleep apnea), and polycystic ovary syndrome.
- 4 **Gestational Diabetes** [risk factors](#) can be described as **MOMMA** – **M**aternal (over aged 25), **O**verweight or obese, **M**acrosomia (previous large baby), **M**ultiple Pregnancies, **A** history of diabetes in the family.
- 5 Diabetes can take a toll on nearly [every part](#) of your body, including your heart and blood vessels, eyes, kidneys, nerves, gastrointestinal tract, gums and teeth.

- **Heart disease and blood vessel disease** are common problems for many people who don't have their diabetes managed properly. These people are at least 2x as likely to have heart problems and strokes as the average person.
 - Diabetes is the leading cause of **new vision loss** among adults ages 20 to 74. It can lead to eye problems, some of which can cause blindness if not treated. These include cataracts, glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy. Consult your doctor if you are experiencing vision changes.
 - Diabetes is one of the leading causes of **kidney failure** in adults, and one usually doesn't notice symptoms of early diabetes-related kidney disease until later stages. Consult your doctor if your feet and legs are swelling.
 - Having diabetes puts you at higher risk for **gum disease**. Consult your doctor if your gums are red and swollen and bleed easily.
- 6 If one goes into a **diabetic coma**, they're alive but they can't wake up or respond purposefully to sights, sounds or other types of stimulation. A diabetic coma is a medical emergency. If you have symptoms of high or low blood sugar and you feel like you may pass out, call 911.

DID YOU KNOW?



AIMGA experts are available to speak to your organization on this topic.

Book your presentation today by emailing drew@aimga.ca

For more information, check out the full version of the "Living Well With AIMGA" Newsletter by scanning the QR code below with your phone!



<https://aimga.ca/wp-content/uploads/11.November2023-LivingWithAIMGA-Newsletter.pdf>