World Health Day 2016

Beat diabetes
Eat healthy Be active

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This year’s World Health Day 2016 focuses on diabetes to raise people’s awareness of the disease and the ways in which it can be prevented, and for those with the disease, effectively managed to avoid complications, through physical activity, healthy eating and early diagnosis.

About diabetes

Diabetes is a chronic disease that occurs either when the pancreas does not produce enough insulin or when the body cannot effectively use the insulin it produces. Insulin, a hormone that regulates blood sugar, gives us the energy that we need to live. If it cannot get into the cells to be burned as energy, sugar builds up to harmful levels in the blood.

There are 2 main forms of the disease. Type 1 diabetes is characterized by a lack of insulin production and cannot be prevented. Type 2 diabetes results from the body's ineffective use of insulin and can be prevented – just 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity on most days and a healthy diet can drastically reduce the risk of developing type 2 diabetes. People with either form of diabetes can, however, live long, healthy and active lives.

Our Region has the highest rates of diabetes in the world, due to the increase in type 2 diabetes. Type 2 diabetes can be prevented through engaging in regular physical activity, reaching and maintaining a good weight and eating healthy food.

Still, diabetes continues to claim as many as 1.5 million lives every year worldwide, many of

which are preventable through engaging in regular physical activity, reaching and maintaining a good weight and eating healthy food, and increasing access to diagnosis, self-management education and affordable treatment.

Governments can:

raise public awareness about the threat of diabetes

create environments that enable people to follow healthy lifestyles

implement measures that reduce the exposure of populations to risk behaviours that can lead to diabetes or its complications.

Individuals can:

engage in regular physical activity

maintain a healthy weight

eat healthy food.

Related links

World Health Day 2016: Beat diabetes

Diabetes: A bitter illness

Diabetes can be prevented and managed through diet and physical activity

[Health at your fingertips: using mobiles to help diabetics in Egypt]

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