

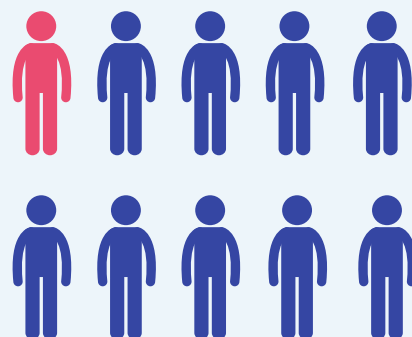
world diabetes day

14 November

World Diabetes Day (WDD) is celebrated on November 14, the birthday of Sir Frederick Banting who co-discovered insulin 100 years ago. The WDD campaign is led by the International Diabetes Federation. Its overarching theme for the period 2021 to 2023 is **access to diabetes care**. In 2023, the campaign focuses on the importance of **knowing your risk of Type 2 Diabetes (T2D)** to help delay and prevent the condition as well as highlighting the impact of diabetes-related complications and the importance of having timely access to the right information and care.

What is diabetes?

Diabetes is a complex condition, covering a range of causes and expressions. The World Health Organization recognises 14 different types of diabetes, of which **T2D is the most common, accounting for over 90% of all cases worldwide**. Diabetes occurs when the body cannot produce enough insulin or cannot use effectively the insulin it produces, causing elevated levels of glucose in the blood.



**1 in 10 adults worldwide
have diabetes**

The diabetes epidemic

Diabetes is a **lifelong disease with no cure** that **affected 537 million people across the world** in 2021, of whom **61 million in Europe**, and this figure is anticipated to increase to 643 million by 2030 (66 million in Europe).



“Know your risk, know your response”

T2D develops as a result of a combination of unmodifiable factors such as, genetic, physiological, environmental, as well as modifiable behavioural risk factors such as healthy eating and physical activity. Diabetes is often termed a silent disease, as many people can live with T2D, unaware that they have the disease, for many years.

Primary prevention of diabetes (and hypertension) should be tackled by addressing the social determinants of health, promoting health-enabling environments at a national or community level, and developing awareness-raising and screening campaigns. Any delay in both the diagnosis and effective treatment of people living with diabetes (PwD) throughout the life cycle can lead to the development of severe complications such as blindness, cardiovascular and kidney diseases and lower limb amputation.



Although there are many unmodifiable factors contributing to the development of diabetes, **knowing all risk factors, including modifiable behavioural risk factors, can help prevent the potential development of T2D.** As well as being important in the prevention of T2D, **knowing your risk can help reduce the risk of developing diabetes-related complications.** Questionnaires have been identified as a simple, inexpensive and practical way of identifying people who may be at risk of developing T2D. The International Diabetes Federation developed a **T2D online risk assessment** which aims to predict an individual’s risk of developing T2D within the next ten years. The online risk assessment tool can be found [here](#).

Several risk factors have been associated with T2D and include:

- Family history of diabetes
- Overweight
- Unhealthy diet
- Physical inactivity
- Increasing age
- High blood pressure
- Ethnicity
- Impaired glucose tolerance
- History of gestational diabetes
- Poor nutrition during pregnancy



Awareness and access to the correct information and best available medicines and tools is vital to delay or lower the risk of complications

Diabetes is a life-long and progressive condition that negatively affects the quality of life of PwD and reduces life expectancy by up to 10 years. Appropriate glycaemic control and management is fundamental to lower the risk of and delay diabetes complications. Ensuring access to the necessary technologies and medication can help PwD achieve optimal glycemic control. Access to structured diabetes education and peer support from peers and the community are also essential to help PwD access information, understand their condition and the key principles of diabetes management, take informed decisions and, in particular, to receive emotional and social support. Contact with peers has proven to be a very effective way both of educating and supporting PwD.

Potential complications for PwD are many.

One in three PwD develop cardiovascular diseases and one in two have peripheral neuropathy. Diabetes and hypertension is also the **cause of 80% of end-stage renal disease.** Furthermore, PwD are **2-3 times more likely to experience depression and one in three develop diabetic retinopathy.** For more information on the complications and comorbidities of diabetes, The International Diabetes Federation Europe, developed '[the wheel of complications](#)' extensively highlighting the potential diabetes-related complications for PwD. **This highlights the importance of preventing T2D and having timely access to information and care.**

Complications include:

- Depression
- Stroke and other brain diseases
- Peripheral neuropathy
- Diabetic retinopathy
- Cardiovascular diseases such as hypertension, heart attack and heart failure
- Kidney/renal disease

The DigiCare4You solution

DigiCare4You aims to improve the early prevention and management of T2D and hypertension via a community screening strategy combined with a person-centred intervention, that integrates both social and healthcare systems, supported by the use of digital tools. The goal of this intervention is not only to improve the health status of the users, but also to empower the entire family in adopting a healthy lifestyle. The DigiCare4You solution provides PwD a digital self-care support tool which is also vital to delay or lower the risk of complications.