

## TIPS ON HOW TO PREVENT DIABETES COMPLICATIONS AND ITS RESULTING DISABILITIES

### Control your ABC's

A1C (blood sugar level over 2-3 months):  $\leq$  6.5%  
Blood pressure: < 130/80 mmHg  
Cholesterol: LDL < 2.5 mmol/L

### Eat a healthy & balanced diet

Take the right amount of calories to suit your body size and physical activity.  
Avoid sweets, fatty and salty food.  
Avoid alcoholic drinks.

### Control your weight

If you are overweight, lose the excess weight until you reach your desirable weight.  
If you are underweight, work for weight gain until your weight goal is reached.

### Exercise regularly

Your blood sugar must be reasonably controlled before you begin. Get at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity for at least 5 days a week.

### Quit smoking

Also avoid exposure to cigarette smoke.  
The damage to the body caused by diabetes is doubled, causing hardening of the arteries, making amputations and strokes more likely.

### Use medicines wisely

People with diabetes need to take oral hypoglycemic medications or take insulin shots. Be sure to follow directions correctly.

### Visit your doctor often

Regular check-up will help you in monitoring your condition. The sooner the problems are spotted, the more likely that they can be treated and prevented from getting worse.

*Having disabilities does not mean the end.  
Something can still be done.*

*For diabetes consultation, please visit:*

### Diabetes Clinic

2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Davao Medical Center-JICA Building  
J.P. Laurel St., Davao City

*For eye check-up and  
physical rehabilitation, please visit:*

### Davao Jubilee Foundation for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled, Inc.

Sitio Escuela, Catalunan Grande, Davao City  
Telefax: (+63 82) 297—1398  
Email: djfrd\_inc@yahoo.com

The **Diabetes & Disabilities** is part of the IEC campaign of the Diabetes Project. The **Diabetes Project** aims to build local capacities through an integrated approach for the prevention, control and management of complications and disabilities linked to diabetes.

Implementation of the Diabetes Project is spearheaded by Handicap International (HI), in partnership with Davao City Health Office (CHO), Davao Jubilee Foundation for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled, Inc. (DJFRD), Davao Medical Center (DMC), and Davao Sugar Multipurpose Cooperative (DASUMULCORE).

*For more information about the Diabetes Project, please contact:*

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**HANDICAP  
INTERNATIONAL**

*Vivre debout*

# DIABETES & DISABILITIES

TIPS ON HOW TO PREVENT  
DIABETES COMPLICATIONS  
AND ITS RESULTING DISABILITIES

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**Diabetes mellitus**, or simply diabetes, is a disease which results from build-up of high levels of sugar in the blood due to the following conditions:

- the pancreas does not produce enough insulin;
- the body cannot properly use insulin; or
- both.

**Insulin** is a hormone produced by the pancreas. It helps keep the blood sugar at the right level. It is necessary for the proper use of sugar by muscles, fat and liver.

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A disability is a limitation of a person's capabilities resulting from any loss of normal physical or psychological functions.

Diabetes is one of the leading causes of disability in persons over 45 years old.

The common physical disabilities due to diabetes are the following:

- **amputations;**
- **blindness; and**
- **stroke.**

### DIABETES & AMPUTATIONS



*Most amputations begin with a foot sore.*

People with diabetes are at risk of **nerve damage** (neuropathy) and **problems with the blood supply to their feet** (ischemia). Both can lead to foot sores and slow-healing wounds.

People with nerve damage experience numbness, tingling or pain the legs, and fail to notice minor scratches, burns or wounds.

These scratches, burns or wounds may get infected and result to amputations.



**EVERY 30 SECONDS  
A LEG IS LOST...**



**DUE TO DIABETES.**

**85% OF AMPUTATIONS CAN BE PREVENTED!**

Here are some **FOOT CARE TIPS** that can help you to prevent amputations:

1. Control your blood sugar.
2. Inspect your feet daily for cuts or sores.
3. Wash your feet in warm water with mild soap and dry it thoroughly.
4. Apply lotion regularly.
5. Cut your nails straight across, not too short and file the edges.
6. Avoid using chemical reagents for removal of corns or calluses.
7. Avoid scratching insect bites.
8. Avoid exposure to hot or cold environment or material.
9. Do not walk barefoot.
10. Wear socks, shoes or slippers that accommodate your feet well.
11. Use cotton socks and rubber or leather shoes.
12. Buy new shoes in the afternoon. Feet tend to swell at this time.
13. Wear new shoes 2 hours at a time to prevent blisters.
14. Inspect socks or shoes for any foreign objects before putting them on.
15. Visit you doctor or diabetes care center regularly.

### DIABETES & BLINDNESS



Eye complications in diabetes are common. If left untreated, they lead to progressive loss of vision and ultimately, blindness.

**Diabetic retinopathy** will develop in 74% of people who have diabetes for 10 years or more. This is caused by damage to the nerve cells in the eyes.

**BE SURE TO HAVE YOUR EYES CHECKED EVERY YEAR BY AN EYE CARE SPECIALIST!**

### DIABETES & STROKE

People with diabetes are 2 times more likely to have heart attack and stroke than non-diabetics. These diseases are the major causes of death in diabetes.

People who do survive mostly develop paralysis, muscular weakness, speech or hearing defects and brain damage.

Aside from controlling blood sugar levels, other risk factors such as high blood pressure and high cholesterol levels should be controlled.