



Diabetes is one of the major health and development challenges of the 21st century.

There are currently 371 million people living with diabetes and another 280 million are at high risk of developing the disease. Half a billion people are expected to be living with diabetes by 2030. Diabetes and its complications are largely preventable and there are proven, affordable interventions available. Everyone is concerned and everyone has a role to play in helping to turn the tide of diabetes to protect our future.

If these numbers sound staggering, you're spot on. Type 2 diabetes is a global public health crisis that threatens the economies of all nations, particularly developing countries. Fueled by rapid urbanization, nutrition transition, and increasingly sedentary lifestyles, the epidemic has grown in parallel with the worldwide rise in obesity.

Once a disease of the West, type 2 diabetes has now spread to every country in the world. Once "a disease of affluence," it is now increasingly common among the poor. Once an adult-onset disease almost unheard of in children, rising rates of childhood obesity have rendered the disease all too common at the pediatrician's office.

Today, Asia accounts for 60% of the world's diabetic population. However, obesity rates do not directly correspond with diabetes rates. India, for example, has a very low prevalence of obesity, but notably high rates of type 2 diabetes.

World Diabetes Day (WDD) is marked every year on November 14 and engages millions of people worldwide in diabetes advocacy and awareness.

This year's campaign is "[Diabetes: Protect our Future](#)" looks to inspire and engage local communities to promote and disseminate simple education and prevention messages and organise activities to strengthen recognition among the public that diabetes is a global health threat with serious and far-reaching consequences that affect us all.

Diabetes and its complications are largely preventable and there are proven, affordable interventions available. To curb the escalating diabetes epidemic, primary prevention through promotion of a healthy diet and lifestyle should be a global public policy priority.

Additional links

[Video: Act on Diabetes. Now.](#)

[WHO Topics: Diabetes](#)

[World Diabetes Day Campaign Book](#)

[Diabetes: Facts and Figures](#)

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