

***Diabetes Victoria: It's time to bust myths around diabetes***

Diabetes is one of the most misunderstood health conditions. To clear the public confusion about what is and isn't true, Diabetes Victoria is launching a brand new ***Bust a Myth*** campaign in early June, debunking the top five myths around living with diabetes.

"Diabetes-related stigma is a very real issue for most Victorians living with diabetes. Being questioned whether or not they can eat certain foods or being blamed for developing diabetes only adds to the pressure of managing and living with this complex health condition," says Diabetes Victoria CEO Craig Bennett.

"We need to bust common myths about diabetes to help Victorians become more knowledgeable about the condition," says Mr Bennett. "Our ***Bust a Myth*** campaign gives us the opportunity to raise awareness about all types of diabetes and the myriad of misconceptions surrounding each."

"People from all walks of life can develop diabetes and we need to ensure these people are supported – instead of being stigmatised – because we too often hear things about diabetes that are simply not true," Mr Bennett adds.

The *Bust a Myth* awareness campaign kicks off on Monday 4 June 2018.

**Five diabetes myths being busted are:**

**Myth 1:** People with diabetes can't eat sugar.

**Fact 1:** People with diabetes can eat what everyone else can eat. People with diabetes do not need 'special foods' and there is no need for a zero-sugar diet.

**Myth 2:** People with diabetes can't play sport.

**Fact 2:** As well as keeping fit and having fun, exercise is good for people living with diabetes, as it can help reduce the risk of diabetes-related complications.

**Myth 3:** People with diabetes don't live long lives.

**Fact 3:** Once diabetes has been diagnosed, you will have to manage the condition for the rest of your life. But this doesn't mean that it will be a short life.

**Myth 4:** People only get diabetes if they are overweight.

**Fact 4:** Being overweight can be a risk factor for type 2 diabetes, but people with diabetes look like everybody else – they come in all shapes, sizes, ages, gender identities and ethnicities.

**Myth 5:** People with diabetes can't do certain jobs.

**Fact 5:** Some decades ago, there were many restrictions on the careers that people with diabetes could have. But times have changed, and so has diabetes management.

The campaign, scheduled to run from Monday 4 to Friday 8 June, consists of five videos of people living with diabetes and dispels the stigma as they carry on with their lives. Diabetes has not stopped Luke celebrating birthdays and eating birthday cake. Sandra has lived more than 60 years with diabetes and is enjoying country life with her horses. Diabetes has not prevented Laura from

completing Half Iron Man events, nor has it stopped Joe from driving trucks. Mignonne enjoys regular exercise to stay trim.

“There are three main types of diabetes: type 1, type 2 and gestational,” says Mr Bennett. “Each type of diabetes has different underlying causes and may be best managed with different strategies. However, once you develop diabetes, you will have to manage the condition every day for the rest of your life. There is a great need to raise awareness about this, in particular.”

Visit the website: [bustamyth.org.au](http://bustamyth.org.au) to learn more about the campaign and Diabetes Victoria’s programs and services.

*We **support, empower and campaign for** all Victorians affected by, or at risk of, diabetes.*

**For more information:**

Jane Kneebone, 0416 148 845, [jkneebone@diabetesvic.org.au](mailto:jkneebone@diabetesvic.org.au)

Sybille Taylor, 0408 102 344, [staylor@diabetesvic.org.au](mailto:staylor@diabetesvic.org.au)

**Further information:**

**Diabetes Victoria**

Diabetes Victoria is the leading charity and peak consumer body working to reduce the impact of diabetes in the Victorian community.

The **Bust a Myth** campaign is directed to all Victorians and all people affected by, or at risk of, diabetes. Diabetes Victoria has produced 5 x 90-second videos highlighting and busting five separate myths about diabetes.

**Background**

This campaign aims to raise awareness of all types of diabetes and highlight common myths surrounding the condition. The campaign also highlights why diabetes is too important to ignore.

Diabetes Victoria is calling on all Victorians to support this campaign from 4 to 8 June 2018 to help raise awareness of diabetes.

Visit the website: [bustamyth.org.au](http://bustamyth.org.au) to learn more.

Every day around 80 Victorians develop diabetes. The latest figures show that 323,000 Victorians have been diagnosed with diabetes. In addition, Diabetes Victoria estimates that 125,000 Victorians don’t know that they have type 2 diabetes and a further 750,000 Victorians are at risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

In total, Diabetes Victoria therefore estimates that there are currently 435,000 people living with diabetes in our state.