

Diabetes set to be top health problem in Victoria

Thursday 22 February: Diabetes is set to become Victoria's number one health issue. With almost 10,000 newly diagnosed cases in the past 12 months alone, there are now more than 323,300 Victorians registered on the National Diabetes Services Scheme (NDSS). In addition, peak consumer body Diabetes Victoria estimates that another 125,000 Victorians currently live with undiagnosed type 2 diabetes.

"Undiagnosed type 2 diabetes is a major problem," says Diabetes Victoria CEO Craig Bennett. "We estimate that around 125,000 people in Victoria do not know that they have type 2 diabetes. If left untreated, blood glucose levels can continue to rise and damage your body over time. Many people do not have any symptoms in the beginning. They might feel there is nothing wrong, until they develop one of the many diabetes-related health complications like heart disease, blindness, loss of a limb, or kidney damage. This is why type 2 diabetes is often called the silent killer."

Recent NDSS data also highlights that the vast majority of the 323,300 or so Victorians live with type 2 diabetes (87 per cent). Type 1 diabetes accounts for 9 per cent of all Victorian diabetes registrations. The NDSS data shows that over 66 percent of people living with type 2 diabetes are over sixty years of age.

"We provide programs, training courses, information, resources and other services to help people recently diagnosed with diabetes," Mr Bennett continues.

NDSS data summary for Victoria:

	type 1 diabetes	type 2 diabetes	gestational diabetes	Other	Total
31 Dec 16	29,033	272,942	9697	1919	313,591
31 Dec 17	29,163	282,323	9670	2156	323,312

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

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About diabetes:

While all types of diabetes are serious and complex, they have varying underlying causes and management options. There are three main types: type 1 diabetes, type 2 diabetes and gestational diabetes.

Type 1 diabetes is an autoimmune condition, which rapidly results in complete insulin deficiency and requires lifelong insulin replacement for survival. Our bodies need insulin to convert blood glucose into energy. Type 1 diabetes is not related to any lifestyle factors and cannot be prevented.

Type 2 diabetes is the most common form of diabetes and can be triggered by being inactive or carrying excess weight around the abdomen. It can run in families and it is often associated with high cholesterol and high blood pressure. Unlike type 1 diabetes, where the body destroys insulin producing cells in the pancreas, type 2 diabetes is a metabolic disorder in which the body either does not produce enough insulin or becomes resistant to the levels it is producing.

Gestational diabetes needs to be managed carefully to protect the health of both the mother and the unborn baby. Gestational diabetes is usually resolved upon delivery. However, women who have had gestational diabetes have a higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes later.