

# NATIONAL DIABETES ACTION PLAN – 2010

## **PREVENT type 2 diabetes and AVOID kidney damage Don't be the type to leave it too late!**

### **Why focus on diabetes prevention?**

An estimated 1.7 million Australians have diabetes. Only half the people with diabetes know they have it. For every person known to have type 2 diabetes, another is yet to be diagnosed. There are also an estimated 2 million Australians at high risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

Research shows that most people do not think diabetes is a serious illness and underestimate their risk.

It is important to note that in many cases type 2 diabetes can be prevented.

### **Who is the campaign for?**

The campaign is for Australian adults who may be at risk of type 2 diabetes. This includes people who are over 40, overweight and people who may have a family history of type 2 diabetes.

### **What is the aim of the campaign?**

The campaign aims to encourage people at high risk of type 2 diabetes:

- To identify the relationship between type 2 diabetes and kidney damage
- To call 1300 136 588 for more information on type 2 diabetes prevention
- To assess their risk and complete the AUSDRISK test
- To visit their GP to discuss their risk of type 2 diabetes
- To increase the number of people taking part in diabetes prevention activities.

### **Why focus on kidney damage?**

Diabetes is a major driver of kidney disease in Australia yet less than 10 per cent of Australians are aware of this problem. People with diabetes are three times more likely to develop kidney damage and often experience reduced quality of life.

Regular dialysis is often required just to stay alive with people spending several hours a day, several days a week hooked up to a dialysis machine to clean the blood. The number of new patients with type 2 diabetes who need dialysis has doubled in the past eight years.

### **Are kidneys important?**

Kidneys play an important role in maintaining your health and quality of life. They filter the blood and excrete waste products. They help regulate blood pressure, keep your bones strong and stimulate the production of red blood cells which carry oxygen around the body.

### **What are the risk factors for kidney disease?**

Risk factors include:

- diabetes
- high blood pressure
- obesity
- age more than 50 years
- family history of kidney disease
- smoking
- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent

### **How many Australians are affected by kidney disease?**

Surveys show that about 1.7 million adult Australians have evidence of mild to moderate kidney disease and are at increased risk of kidney failure or cardiovascular disease.

### **How does kidney dialysis impact in Australia?**

Diabetes is the most common cause of a person requiring dialysis in Australia

- 10,000 Australians on dialysis
- \$100,000 per year average cost
- \$1 billion cost nationally in 2010

### **What is pre-diabetes?**

Impaired fasting glucose (IFG) and impaired glucose tolerance (IGT) are conditions where blood glucose levels are higher than normal but not high enough for a diagnosis of type 2 diabetes. The term 'pre-diabetes' is often used to describe these conditions. Studies have shown that people with pre-diabetes have an increased risk of developing cardiovascular disease.

### **What is type 2 diabetes?**

Type 2 diabetes occurs when either the insulin is not working effectively (insulin resistance) or the pancreas does not produce sufficient insulin, or a combination of both. Type 2 diabetes:

- Represents 85–90 per cent of all cases of diabetes
- Usually develops in adults over the age of 45 years but is increasingly occurring at a younger age
- Is more likely to develop in people with a family history or from particular ethnic backgrounds
- Symptoms may be similar to those for type 1 diabetes. Other symptoms can include: frequent infections (thrush, urinary tract or skin infections) and slow wound healing. Many people with type 2 diabetes do not have any symptoms.
- For some people the first indication of diabetes coincides with a complication of diabetes such as a heart attack, foot ulcer or stroke
- Can be managed with a healthy lifestyle and regular medical checks in the early stages, but eventually medications and/or insulin may be required. It is estimated that after 7–10 years of having diabetes, 60 per cent of people will require insulin.

### **Who is at risk of developing type 2 diabetes?**

- people who are inactive
- people who have a family history of type 2 diabetes
- people who are overweight or obese
- people with pre-diabetes
- people with high blood pressure and/or abnormal fats or a history of cardiovascular disease
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- people from certain ethnic backgrounds
- women who have had diabetes during pregnancy (gestational diabetes)
- women with polycystic ovarian syndrome and are overweight
- smokers
- people taking antipsychotic medication

### **Can type 2 diabetes be prevented?**

A person's risk of developing type 2 diabetes can be reduced by maintaining a healthy weight, being physically active and following a healthy eating plan.

### **Can people prevent type 1 diabetes?**

Type 1 diabetes cannot be prevented.

### **What is AUSDRISK?**

The AUSDRISK (Australian Type 2 Diabetes Risk Assessment Tool) was developed in 2008 as part of an Australian Government health initiative aimed at preventing type 2 diabetes, raising awareness of and detecting undiagnosed type 2 diabetes.

### **What does the AUSDRISK do?**

The tool assesses a person's risk of developing type 2 diabetes within the next five years, based on a score for risk factors such as age, gender, country of birth, family history of diabetes, history of high blood pressure, smoking status, fruit and vegetable intake, physical activity levels and waist circumference. Those with a score of 12 or more are encouraged to speak to their GP and to consider participating in a lifestyle modification program, such as the Life! program in Victoria or type 2 diabetes prevention programs in other states.

### **Refer to the Australian Type 2 Diabetes Risk Assessment test at**

[http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/C73A9D4A2E9C684ACA2574730002A31B/\\$File/Risk\\_Assessment\\_Tool.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/C73A9D4A2E9C684ACA2574730002A31B/$File/Risk_Assessment_Tool.pdf)

Or in Victoria [www.diabeteslife.org.au](http://www.diabeteslife.org.au)

### **More information on kidneys**

#### **The kidneys have four main functions:**

- Acting as a filter - filtering waste products from the blood and removing via the urine.

- Making and controlling important hormones in the body - these hormones assist with maintenance of a healthy blood pressure, make red blood cells and help to strengthen bones.
- Removing extra fluid from the body.
- Balancing electrolytes (minerals and salts) in the body by removing excess fluids and salts via the urine.

### **How can diabetes affect the kidneys?**

Raised blood glucose levels and elevated blood pressure over time can damage the delicate blood vessels and filters of the kidney (known as the glomeruli). This can cause leakage of protein into the urine. Protein in the urine is known as albuminuria.

### **How to help protect your kidneys**

Kidney disease is often silent, and people may have developed early stage damage to their kidneys without realising. It is never too late to start looking after yourself and your health. Regular screening by your diabetes team is essential for good management.

Other important factors are:

- Good diabetes control: Aim for HbA1c of  $\leq 7\%$  \*
- Good blood pressure control: Current guidelines suggest target ranges  $\leq 125/75$ ; weight reduction if carrying excess weight; exercise; reducing dietary salt intake and taking blood pressure medication are additional methods to assist a healthy blood pressure.
- Stop smoking. Ask your GP for information on QUIT line (137 848).
- Visit the diabetes team regularly. An annual urine and blood test is required.
- Medication: There are various medications which are prescribed to control high blood pressure.

### **Further information**

- [www.diabetesvic.org.au](http://www.diabetesvic.org.au)
- Diabetes Infoline 1300136 588
- Kidney Info Line freecall 1800 4 KIDNEY (1800 4 543639)
- [www.kidney.org.au](http://www.kidney.org.au)