



Getting Active This Diabetes Action Month

November is Diabetes Action Month. Diabetes NZ have created an awareness and action campaign that focuses on educating New Zealanders about diabetes, inspiring Kiwis to take action, and encouraging everyone to support those who have diabetes.

And for good reason. There are over 240,000 people in New Zealand who have been diagnosed with diabetes, most of them are type 2 diabetics, and with cases of obesity-related type 2 diabetes on the rise. It is suggested that there are another 100,000 people who are diabetics but undiagnosed.

It's important to note the difference between the two types of diabetes, with type 1 or insulin dependent diabetes being a condition that is not a result of lifestyle choices and can be managed, but not 'cured'. As the exact mechanism that causes type 1 diabetes has not been established, it cannot be 'prevented' the way type 2 diabetes can. However it is rare with just 10% of all those with diabetes having type 1 diabetes. It can also be managed well through a healthy lifestyle.

Type 2 diabetes however, is mostly caused as a result of dietary and lifestyle habits. As a result of these factors, the body becomes less able to produce insulin. Type 2 diabetes can be managed well with a healthy lifestyle. While medical intervention is important for many with type 2 diabetes, it is lifestyle related prevention and treatment that is becoming more popular.

Exercise and nutrition play important roles should a reduction in weight be identified as part of lifestyle changes to manage diabetes. There are other health benefits of exercise unrelated to weight-loss such as glucose control, and prevention of heart related diseases which are positive enough alone to encourage exercise.

Healthy living guidelines such as those produced by our Ministry of Health have recommended regular exercise as part of reducing the risk of diabetes and other preventable diseases for a number of years. While any sort of movement is recommended, a number of specific styles of physical activity have gained popularity in providing results for those with diabetes. For those with more advanced conditions, slow and steady will be more safe and realistic.

Symptoms of diabetes vary, but if you have any of the above risk factors and are experiencing the following it is important to seek medical advice. These can include:

Feeling tired and lacking energy

Feeling thirsty and/or hungry

Getting infections frequently that are hard to heal

Poor eyesight or blurred vision

Should your doctor or medical professional advise more exercise is required for your diabetes management or prevention, support can be gained through the exercise community and New Zealand registered exercise professionals who have the knowledge and skill to support you.

Links:

<http://www.diabetes.org.nz>

Contact details for further information about the exercise industry:

NZ Register of Exercise Professionals, Registrar Stephen Gacsal

Email: stephen@reps.org.nz telephone: 0800 55 44 99 website: www.reps.org.nz

NZ Register of Exercise Professionals (REPs) - Independent not for profit quality mark of exercise professionals and facilities. Using REPs Registered Exercise Professionals is the “warrant of fitness check” that exercise professionals and facilities meet New Zealand and internationally benchmarked standards to deliver safe exercise advice and instruction. REPs is affiliated globally to other national exercise professional registers representing over 210,000 exercise professionals through the International Confederation of Registers for Exercise Professionals (ICREPs) - www.icreps.org

Exercise Association of New Zealand, Chief Executive Richard Beddie

Email: richard@exercisenz.org.nz, telephone: 0800 66 88 11 website: <http://www.exercisenz.org.nz>

Exercise Association of New Zealand - Not for profit exercise industry representative organisation. Its *mission is to proactively support a sustainable exercise and fitness industry in New Zealand by growing participation in structured exercise through advocacy, information and industry standards.*

