

14 November 2023  
World Diabetes Day 2023

## Getting regular check-ups a must for rural Australians with diabetes

On World Diabetes Day 2023 (Tuesday 14 November), the Rural Doctors Association of Australia (RDAA) is reminding rural and remote Australians with diabetes that it is crucial they have regular check-ups with their local doctor to manage their condition.

RDAA is encouraging those diagnosed with diabetes to access healthcare and, where needed, mental healthcare to help them in fighting what, in many cases, is a lifelong disease.

World Diabetes Day is marked annually on 14 November, the birthday of Sir Frederick Banting who – with Charles Best – discovered insulin in 1921.

Prior to the discovery of insulin, Type 1 diabetes was a fatal disease.

“Diabetes is a serious condition in any of its forms – and it is important that everyone knows what the different types of diabetes are” **RDAA President, Dr RT Lewandowski, said.**

“**Type 1 diabetes is not related to diet and is not preventable, and while a family history of the disease can be involved, it isn’t always the case.** Four children each day in Australia are diagnosed with this lifelong condition, and teenagers and adults can also be diagnosed with it. There is no cure for Type 1 diabetes, and treatment is via the daily injection of insulin in order to stay alive.

“If your child or teenager is unusually tired or irritable, has a thirst that cannot be quenched and is losing weight inexplicably, please get them to your local doctor, hospital or health centre as soon as possible to be tested for Type 1 diabetes, as not commencing treatment early enough can be fatal.

“**Type 2 diabetes represents 85–90 percent of all cases of diabetes,** and develops over a long period of time. While it usually develops in adults over 45 years of age, it is increasingly occurring in younger people.

“Type 2 diabetes has genetic and family-related risk factors, but it can often be prevented or managed by following a healthy diet, undertaking regular physical activity, and maintaining a normal body weight.

“It is important to get a regular check-up with your doctor to ensure you don’t have – or are not close to developing – Type 2 diabetes. Once diagnosed as being a pre-Type 2 diabetic or Type 2 diabetic, it is critical that you make the lifestyle modifications needed in order to better control your condition or prevent it from getting worse.

“There are also other types of diabetes, including **Gestational Diabetes** – pregnant women will be screened for this condition by their doctor or other healthcare professional.

“Diabetes is a major cause of blindness, kidney failure, heart attacks, stroke and lower limb amputation – so it is crucial that, once diagnosed with any form of the disease, you seek regular check-ups from your local doctor. This will include screening for kidney disease, regular eye exams, and foot health checks.



“For Type 1 diabetics in particular, the daily challenges of having to manage your condition and the insulin injections required can also take a big toll on your mental health – so please reach out to your local rural doctor or diabetes nurse for mental healthcare too, as this is just as important as the physical care we can provide to you.”

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A high resolution photo of Dr RT Lewandowski is [available here](#).

For more information on diabetes visit [www.jdrf.org.au](http://www.jdrf.org.au) (Type 1 diabetes) and [www.diabetesaustralia.com.au](http://www.diabetesaustralia.com.au).

**Media contacts:**

Patrick Daley on 0408 004 890

Ineke Kuiper on 0408 669 638