

WHO Press Release

For the commemoration of World Diabetes Day

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Kabul 14 November 2011 – Commemorating World Diabetes Day, WHO and the Minister of Public Health (MoPH) of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, stressed the importance of informing Afghans about preventing diabetes symptoms and seeking help through the public health service sector. Recognizing the importance of the rise of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) like diabetes, the MoPH has initiated a directory for NCDs. The first phase was initiated this year.

Prevention

Simple lifestyle measures like a healthy diet, regular physical activity, maintaining a normal body weight and avoiding tobacco use can prevent or delay the onset of type 2 diabetes.

To help prevent type 2 diabetes and its complications, people should:

- Achieve and maintain healthy body weight;
- Be physically active – at least 30 minutes of regular, moderate-intensity activity on most days. More activity is required for weight control;
- Eat a healthy diet of between three and five servings of fruit and vegetables a day and reduce sugar and saturated fats intake;
- Avoid tobacco use – smoking increases the risk of cardiovascular diseases.

WHO activities to prevent and control diabetes

WHO aims to stimulate and support the adoption of effective measures for the surveillance, prevention and control of diabetes and its complications in Afghanistan:

- Provides scientific guidelines for diabetes prevention to the MoPH;
- Develops norms and standards for diabetes care;
- Builds awareness on the global epidemic of diabetes by celebrating World Diabetes Day
- Conducts surveillance of diabetes and its risk factors.

Diabetes is a chronic disease, which occurs when the pancreas does not produce enough insulin, or when the body cannot effectively use the insulin it produces. WHO estimates that more than 346 million people worldwide have diabetes. This number is likely to more than double by 2030 without intervention. Almost 80% of diabetes deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries. Worldwide, diabetes is responsible for 4.6 million deaths a year - 1 every 7 seconds. Diabetes is among the top 10 causes of disability, resulting in devastating complications such as blindness and lower limb amputations. Diabetes hits the poorest hardest. Diabetes undermines global development.

For more information, please contact:

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