6 April 2016

**World Health Day: let’s beat diabetes!**

The number of Sunshine Coast residents living with Type 2 diabetes could almost fill Sunshine Coast Stadium!

It is an alarming figure which has grown by about 10 per cent in the past two years, and many more residents aren’t even aware they have the disease.

Tomorrow (7 April) is World Health Day, and this year the focus is on the fight against diabetes.

In Australia, about 280 people develop diabetes (including Types 1 and 2) every day. Today in Queensland, 62 people will be diagnosed. In the next five years, diabetes is set to become our number one burden of disease in Australia.

Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service’s (SCHHS) Director of Diabetes and Endocrinology Dr Shyam Sunder is urging residents to take action and make healthy lifestyle choices to reduce their risk of diabetes.

Dr Sunder said while the number of Australians at risk of developing Type 2 diabetes was alarming, up to 80 per cent of cases could be prevented.

“Changes in diet and increasing physical activity can reverse the epidemic of diabetes,” Dr Sunder said.

“A healthy diet including fresh vegetables, fruit, nuts and low in sugar and saturated fats can help prevent Type 2 diabetes, and portions matter. This would also help people to manage Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes if they have it.

“Being physically active, through at least 30 minutes of regular, moderate-intensity activity on most days, can help prevent Type 2 diabetes and its complications, as well as help people to better manage Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes.”

Symptoms for diabetes include thirst, hunger, weight loss, fatigue and blurred vision. However, many people who have diabetes do not have symptoms.

Early diagnosis can be done through blood testing. If you think you might have the disease, talk to your G.P.

For more information: [https://www.diabetesaustralia.com.au/](https://www.diabetesaustralia.com.au/)

ENDS
FACTS

TYPE 2 DIABETES: Who’s at Risk?

- Men and women over the age of 45
- Indigenous people
- People with a family history of diabetes
- People with high blood sugar levels – including during pregnancy
- People with high blood pressure

PREVENTION: How to minimise your risks

- **Manage your weight** – Excess body fat, particularly if stored around the abdomen can increase the body’s resistance to the hormone insulin.
- **Exercise regularly** – Moderate physical activity on most days of the week helps manage weight and reduce blood glucose levels.
- **Eat a healthy diet** – Reduce the amount of saturated fat, sugar and salt in your diet, eat fresh fruit, vegetables and high fibre foods.
- **Limit alcohol intake** – Alcohol can increase blood pressure and triglyceride levels.
- **Quit smoking** – Smokers are twice as likely to develop diabetes as non-smokers.
- **Get regular check-ups** – As you get older, regular checks of blood glucose, blood pressure and blood cholesterol levels are a good idea.