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Do you know someone with diabetes?

You may do, considering that approximately **1 in every 10 adults worldwide** – more than 537 million – is living with diabetes. Almost half of this group (an estimated 240 million people) do not know they have it.¹

Team Novo Nordisk is a global sports team comprised entirely of athletes with diabetes. Our mission is to inspire, educate and empower everyone affected by diabetes.

#DrivingChange





About Team Novo Nordisk

Team Novo Nordisk is a global sports team of cyclists spearheaded by the world's first all-diabetes professional cycling team. All the athletes on the team have type 1 diabetes. For over a decade, Team Novo Nordisk has been racing to inspire, educate and empower anyone affected by diabetes worldwide.

When diagnosed with diabetes, many people think it means they cannot live life as they had hoped. However, the athletes on Team Novo Nordisk refuse to let their condition hinder their aspirations.

Whilst it is not always easy and not without challenge, these talented individuals work hard to manage their health. Their experiences and personal stories demonstrate that living well with diabetes and achieving personal goals is possible.

Throughout the year, the Team Novo Nordisk athletes compete in hundreds of sporting events worldwide. The professional cycling team competes in major professional races on the International Cycling Union (UCI) Professional Continental Tour.

“When I was 12 years old, I returned home from a two week ski trip, and my family noticed I had lost significant weight. A week later, I started feeling very sick. I went to the hospital and was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes. I was lucky to have a **very supportive hospital team who told me that diabetes should never define me.**”



Declan Irvine
Professional Cycling Team



“I was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes when I was 9 years old. I was extremely happy and relieved when I learned I could continue cycling – as my endocrinologist said: **YES, sport is a great way to help manage diabetes!**”



Gerd de Keijzer
Professional Cycling Team



“At the hospital, the doctor said I’d likely never be able to compete at a high level again. **But I was determined to prove that I could by taking control of my lifestyle.** I love cycling, and it’s a big part of my life. I could never let anything take that away from me.”



Mandy Marquardt
Team Novo Nordisk Ambassador



What is diabetes?

Diabetes is a chronic medical condition marked by elevated blood sugar levels. Carbohydrates and sugary foods in our diet are broken down into glucose, a type of sugar our body's cells use for energy. The hormone insulin facilitates glucose absorption by the cells from the bloodstream. However, in individuals with diabetes, the body cannot produce sufficient insulin (type 1) or utilise it effectively (type 2). Excess glucose accumulates in the bloodstream, causing damage to various body tissues over time without appropriate insulin production or response.¹

High blood sugar can cause irreversible damage to the eyes, kidneys, nerves and blood vessels. It can lead to disabling and life-threatening health complications, such as amputation and kidney failure.¹

Symptoms of type 1 and type 2 diabetes may include:²



Abnormal thirst



Sudden weight loss



Frequent urination



Constant hunger



Extreme tiredness



Blurred vision



What's the difference?

Type 1 diabetes



The body cannot produce the insulin it needs¹



Number of new cases is growing steadily¹



Usually diagnosed in children or young adults¹



Causes unknown, but develops when the immune system attacks insulin-producing cells¹



The symptoms often appear suddenly¹



Must take insulin daily¹

Type 2 diabetes



The body produces too little insulin and/or is unable to respond to it¹



The number of people with type 2 diabetes worldwide is rising¹



The symptoms often appear gradually¹



Risk factors include:¹ advancing age, excess body weight, poor diet, family history of type 2 diabetes, physical inactivity, ethnicity



A healthy diet, regular physical activity and maintaining a normal body weight can prevent or delay the onset of type 2 diabetes¹



Often managed with exercise, a healthy diet and oral medication. If the condition progresses, it can be treated with insulin¹

Be active, live well with diabetes

If you have diabetes, regular exercise and a healthy diet can help keep blood sugar levels stable, reduce the risk of developing complications, and improve well-being.¹ Regular physical activity can also help prevent or delay the onset of type 2 diabetes.^{2,3}

Be prepared

During physical activity, your blood glucose levels can rise or fall, so you may need to adjust your food intake or insulin dose (if you take insulin to manage your diabetes).² Consult your healthcare professional about adjustments to your diabetes medication.

Talk to your doctor

If you are unsure how to manage your diabetes during exercise, speak to your healthcare professional. This is especially important for participating in high-intensity exercise or sports.

Check your blood glucose

If you have diabetes, it is essential to check your blood glucose before, during and after exercise. Blood glucose levels are affected by what you eat, the intensity and duration of your activities, and even the weather conditions.²

How much and how often

For individuals with diabetes, engaging in daily physical activity and

exercise sessions 3–5 times per week is generally recommended.⁴ Your healthcare professional can assist you in determining the optimal amount and frequency of physical activity for your individual circumstances.

Make it count

You can get active in many ways, from taking part in sports, going for a brisk walk, dancing, swimming, or even simply taking the stairs instead of the lift – anything that raises your heart and breathing rate counts. Find something that suits your fitness level, and remember to have fun!

Start slow

Exercise at a level you feel comfortable with. Start slow and be consistent – it will help avoid aches and pains.

Eat healthily

Eat plenty of fruit and vegetables, reduce saturated fat, eat less sugar, and opt for whole grains rather than refined carbohydrates. Your healthcare professional can help you create a diet plan.

Stay hydrated

Drink plenty of water before, during and after exercise.

If you live with diabetes, it's important to speak to your healthcare professional before taking up exercise, changing your exercise routine, or increasing the intensity or duration of exercise.

Tips from Team Novo Nordisk



Charles Planet

Professional Cycling Team

“Diabetes is part of my life and I feel like any other person - life is full of challenges.”



Matyas Kopecky

Professional Cycling Team

“Dream big and make small steps towards reaching your ambition. Enjoy the journey more than the goal!”



Fiona Wylde

Team Novo Nordisk Ambassador

“I think it’s really important to accept diabetes, be positive and speak with other people to share experiences.”



Stephen Clancy

Professional Cycling Team

“Everyone’s diabetes is different, so work with your healthcare professional to find a way to enjoy sport safely that works for you.”



Mandy Marquardt

Team Novo Nordisk Ambassador

“When living with diabetes — you can’t always control what happens, but you can control how you respond.”



Becky Furuta

Team Novo Nordisk Ambassador

“Remember that there was a younger version of you who didn’t think you’d make it to where you are today and be bravely ambitious in your dreams.”

19 2023

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References

1. International Diabetes Federation. IDF Diabetes Atlas 10th ed. 2021. Accessed May 2023. 2. Colberg SR, Sigal RJ, Yardley JE, et al. Physical Activity/Exercise and Diabetes: A Position Statement of the American Diabetes Association. *Diabetes care*. Nov 2016;39(11):2065-2079. doi:10.2337/dc16-1728 3. International Diabetes Federation. Cost-effective solutions for the prevention of type 2 diabetes. 2016:68. Accessed April 2023. <https://www.idf.org/e-library/epidemiology-research/diabetes-atlas/126-cost-effective-solutions-for-the-prevention-of-type-2-diabetes.html> 4. American Diabetes Association. Standards of Care in Diabetes—2023 Abridged for Primary Care Providers. *Clinical Diabetes*. 2023;41(1):4-31.

Team Novo Nordisk

Team Novo Nordisk races as part of the Driving Change in diabetes® initiative, the Novo Nordisk global commitment to prevent the rise of diabetes and obesity, and to improve conditions for the millions of people living with diabetes today, and those at risk of developing diabetes tomorrow.

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