

World Diabetes Day Advocacy toolkit

Early action on diabetes

*Know the symptoms
Start the conversation
Support every person*

14 November 2026



World Health
Organization

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WHO / Ivan Simone Congolo

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How to use this toolkit

Use this toolkit to raise awareness, start conversations and encourage early action on diabetes.

Make it yours! Adapt, share and explore the resources to support action on diabetes in your setting.

KEY MESSAGES



Use these messages to communicate the importance of early action on diabetes. Adapt them to your context for events, webpages, newsletters, social media and other communications.

CALLS TO ACTION



Choose from calls to action for different audiences. Adapt the messages to reflect your audiences and priorities, and use them in your own communications and advocacy activities.

SOCIAL MEDIA ASSETS



Download the ready-to-use social media tiles and copy, adapt or translate the suggested caption for your own channels. Use #WorldDiabetesDay to join the global conversation online!

PHOTO EXHIBIT



Download and display the photo exhibit at diabetes awareness events or online. Use the stories and images to start conversations about the experiences of people living with diabetes.

COUNTRY STORIES



Read stories from countries across the WHO regions to see how different settings are taking action on diabetes. Use these examples to spark ideas and inspire action in your own context.

PUBLICATIONS



Explore relevant publications, tools and resources to deepen your knowledge and inform action on diabetes. Use them as references when developing policies, programmes and communications.

World Diabetes Day

Global diabetes landscape

More than 800 million adults globally live with diabetes, a number that has **more than quadrupled since 1990**.

Diabetes damages blood vessels over time, which can lead to complications affecting multiple organ systems including the heart, eyes, nerves and kidneys. Early diagnosis and quality treatment can reduce this risk, but complications may still occur.

Since 2000, mortality rates from diabetes have been increasing.



World Diabetes Day

Since 1991, people across the world have come together on 14 November to acknowledge World Diabetes Day.

World Diabetes Day is the world's largest global diabetes awareness initiative, bringing people together to raise awareness about diabetes, inspire action and promote accountability.

The 2026 World Diabetes Day theme is:
“Early action on diabetes”.

Global Diabetes Compact

04

The WHO Global Diabetes Compact

The **WHO Global Diabetes Compact** (GDC) was set up by WHO in 2021 to respond to the increasing number of people living with diabetes.

The GDC aims to reduce the risk of diabetes and ensure that all people living with diabetes have access to equitable, comprehensive, affordable and quality treatment and care.

Through collaboration with people living with diabetes, civil society, technical experts, Member States and other partners, the GDC supports countries to make progress towards the **global diabetes coverage targets** endorsed by WHO Member States in 2022.

Global diabetes coverage targets



80%

of people with diabetes are diagnosed



80%

of people with diagnosed diabetes have good control of glycaemia



80%

of people with diagnosed diabetes have good control of blood pressure



60%

of people with diabetes of 40 years or older receive statins



100%

of people with type 1 diabetes have access to affordable insulin and blood glucose self-monitoring.

Theme

05

The 2026 World Diabetes Day theme is:

“Early action on diabetes”.

This year’s theme highlights the importance of early diagnosis, access to quality diabetes care and reducing diabetes stigma.

The following key messages and calls to action provide a foundation for communication and activities on this year’s theme.

Please feel free to adapt or contextualize these messages to reflect your local priorities, audiences and settings.



WHO / NOOR - Conor Ashleigh

Key messages

#1

KNOWING THE SYMPTOMS

More than 40% of people living with diabetes around the world are undiagnosed. Know the symptoms. Early diagnosis saves lives.

In type 2 diabetes, symptoms may be mild or absent, meaning the condition can go undetected for years and may only be diagnosed after complications develop.

#2

RECOGNIZING TYPE 1 DIABETES

Type 1 diabetes is frequently missed or misdiagnosed. Delayed diagnosis is life-threatening, and without timely treatment, fatal.

Type 1 diabetes can develop at any age and is frequently missed or misdiagnosed, particularly in adults. Recognizing the symptoms can lead to earlier diagnosis and life-saving treatment.

#3

ADVANCING EQUITABLE ACCESS

Early detection of diabetes is only the first step. Diagnosis can only improve outcomes when it is followed by timely care and ongoing support.

Closing the diabetes access gap requires strengthened health systems and investment in policies that enable equitable, uninterrupted access to diabetes medicines and care for everyone.

#4

CREATING HEALTHIER ENVIRONMENTS

Type 2 diabetes risk reduction requires addressing the social and environmental factors that influence health.

Effective type 2 diabetes risk reduction requires addressing inequities by ensuring everyone has access to healthy food, safe places to be physically active and quality health services.

#5

PRIORITIZING QUALITY CARE

Early diagnosis and uninterrupted access to comprehensive care helps people with diabetes live healthy lives.

Quality, uninterrupted diabetes care helps to lower long-term healthcare costs, reduce complications and enable people living with diabetes to live fulfilling, healthy lives.

#6

SUPPORTING, NOT STIGMATIZING

Diabetes stigma is widespread, harmful and preventable. Everyone living with diabetes deserves to be supported.

The words and images we use matter. Respectful, person-centred language and accurate, inclusive representations of diabetes help reduce stigma and create more supportive environments.

Calls to action

EVERYONE



Know the symptoms of diabetes.

1. Learn the symptoms of diabetes and encourage family and friends to do the same.
2. Don't ignore symptoms of diabetes. Seek medical advice if you notice increased thirst, frequent urination, unexplained weight loss, tiredness or blurred vision.
3. Every conversation matters. Challenge stigma and ask questions with curiosity.

HEALTH WORKERS



Know the symptoms. Start the conversation. Support every person.

1. Recognize the symptoms of diabetes to support timely testing, diagnosis and referral.
2. Help reduce diabetes stigma by communicating with empathy, avoiding assumptions and involving people living with diabetes in decisions about their care.
3. Talk with people about diabetes prevention and management and support appropriate care for all types of diabetes.

PEOPLE LIVING WITH DIABETES



Share your experiences and help drive change.

1. Your experience matters. Share your diagnosis journey and experiences to help raise awareness, challenge stigma and encourage earlier diagnosis.
2. Support others by sharing trusted information and encouraging people to seek care.
3. Join the conversation on social media: #WorldDiabetesDay

GOVERNMENTS & POLICY MAKERS



Invest in diabetes today to improve health tomorrow.

1. Integrate diabetes prevention and person-centred care into primary health care.
2. Expand access to affordable essential medicines and supplies: ensure supply chains are funded, functional and reaching the people who need them most.
3. Work with partners to accelerate implementation of the Global Diabetes Compact.

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS



Mobilize communities and amplify impact.

1. Raise awareness of diabetes by sharing accurate, evidence-informed information.
2. Elevate the voices of people living with diabetes through meaningful engagement in communications, advocacy, programmes and policy discussions.
3. Connect people with trusted, evidence-informed and person-centred diabetes services.



WHO / Loan Tran

Social media

#WorldDiabetesDay

[Download the graphics here](#)

Download these ready-to-use social media graphics and use, adapt or translate the suggested captions for your own channels. Use #WorldDiabetesDay to join the global conversation online!

Please retain all branding and credits. Credits: WHO / @missdiabetes

SUPPORT



Diabetes is better managed together.

- Ask how you can support the people in your life with diabetes.
- Listen to what they need—or do not need—from you.
- Remember, blaming and shaming is not helpful.

STIGMA



Let's stop diabetes stigma! The right words go a long way.

Be inclusive.
Be kind.
Be respectful.

COMPLICATIONS



Preventing and managing diabetes complications is key to staying healthy!

- Get regular eye and foot check-ups
- Work with your healthcare team to manage blood pressure, blood sugar and protect your heart and kidneys.

IT'S OKAY



It's okay to not be okay. Managing diabetes can feel overwhelming.

Connecting with people with similar experiences can help.

Remember, you are not alone.

SELF-CARE



Self-care is not selfish, it is essential.

These graphics were developed with Janina Gaudin (@missdiabetes), who lives with type 1 diabetes.

Social media

#WorldDiabetesDay

[Download the graphics here](#)

Follow WHO on social media for more diabetes content this #WorldDiabetesDay!
[[LinkedIn](#)] [[Instagram](#)] [[X](#)] [[TikTok](#)] [[Facebook](#)]

Please retain all branding and credits. Credits: WHO / @missdiabetes

STAGES OF LIFE



Did you know that diabetes can affect people at any stage of life?

Diabetes is diverse. Every face tells a different story. Everyone deserves compassion and access to care, no matter their age.

CHILDREN



Children living with type 1 diabetes benefit from a wide network of support.

- At home: assistance with blood sugar management, including meals and insulin.
- At school: support from teachers who can respond to blood sugars and allow snacks and breaks.

WORKPLACE



Supportive policies and colleagues make diabetes easier to manage while staying productive.

Remember:

- Ask how you can support the people at your work with diabetes.
- Listen to what they need, or do not need, from you.

PREGNANCY



Pregnancies deserve whole-person support.

From looking after your diabetes management to emotional well-being and mental health, every part of you matters.

AGEING



Family, friends and caregivers play a vital role in supporting people living with diabetes.

A strong, caring network can prevent isolation, encourage self-care and make daily diabetes management feel easier.

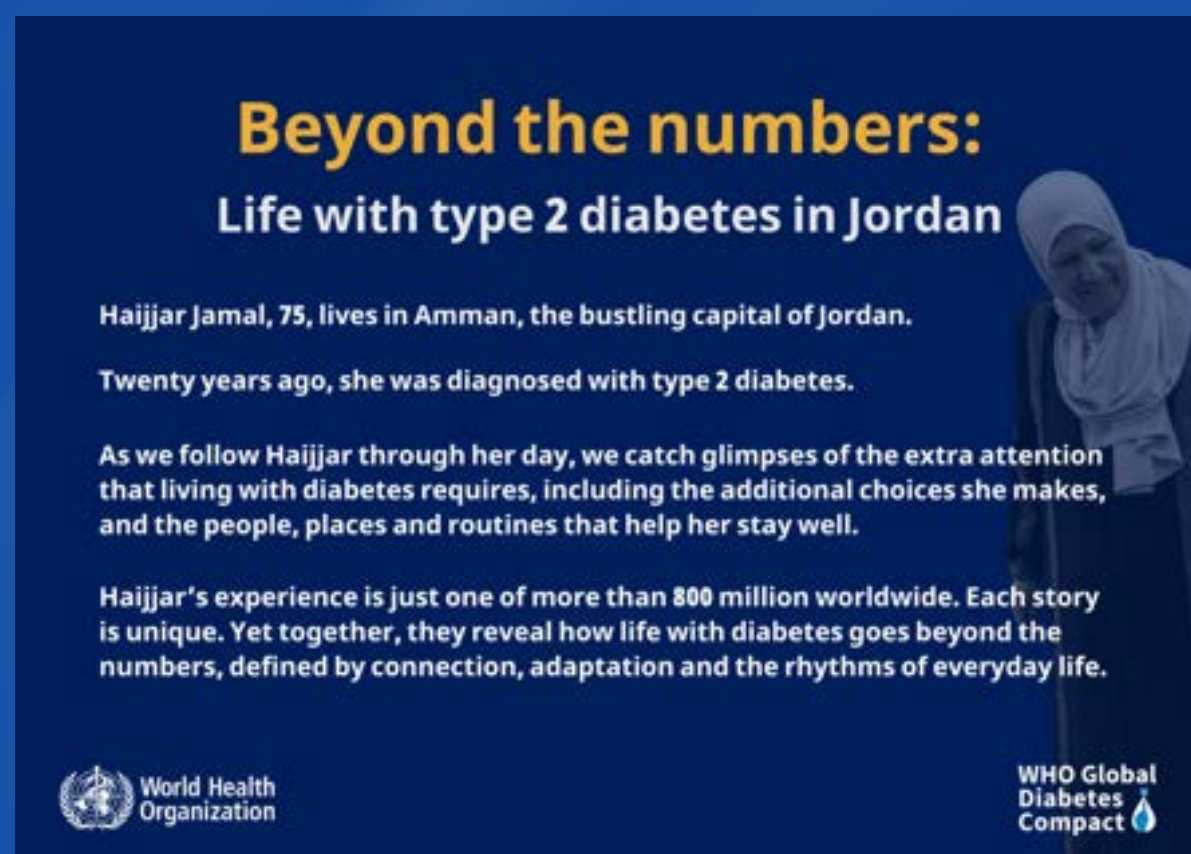
Photo exhibit

[Download the exhibit here](#)

This 9-image photo exhibit about life with type 2 diabetes can be downloaded and shared freely as part of diabetes awareness activities.

If you plan to use the exhibit, please let us know at gdc2030@who.int. When sharing the exhibit, please retain all WHO branding, credits and accompanying captions.

Credits: WHO / NOOR / Annie Sakkab



Country stories

From prevention and diagnosis to access and quality care, countries and communities are taking action on diabetes in diverse ways. These country stories highlight examples of progress, approaches and experiences that can inform action in different contexts.

GERMANY

Measuring the global diabetes targets in the WHO European Region: Germany case study

BELIZE

PAHO Implements World Diabetes Foundation Project to Strengthen Primary Health Care to Combat Diabetes in Belize

GHANA

Advancing Diabetes Care in Ghana: WHO's Collaborative Efforts on the Path to Better Health

KYRGYZSTAN

Mira's story - trust in your health-care provider can go a long way in transforming diabetes care

PHILIPPINES

Advancing universal health coverage for children living with type 1 diabetes

THAILAND

Strengthening comprehensive diabetes care with innovative approaches. Thailand's National Diabetes Remission Programme



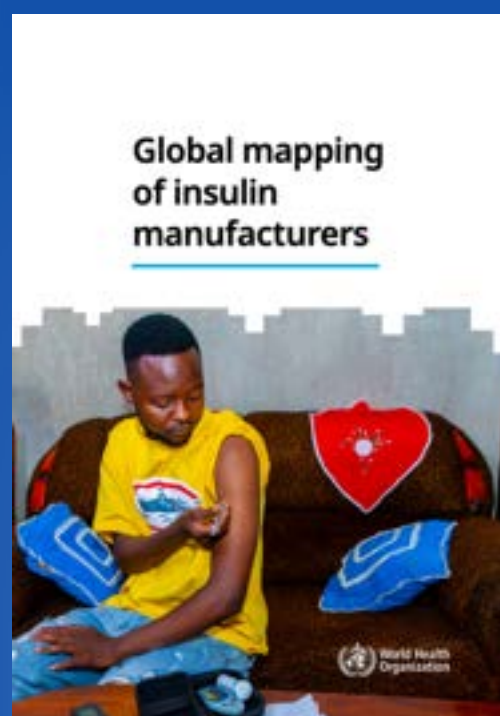
Publications

The GDC brings together resources to support countries, partners and people living with diabetes in strengthening diabetes prevention, care and outcomes. Explore the resources below for technical guidance and practical tools to support action on diabetes.

WHO recommendations on care for women with diabetes during pregnancy



GLP1-receptor agonists landscape: Manufacturer mapping and regulatory pathways



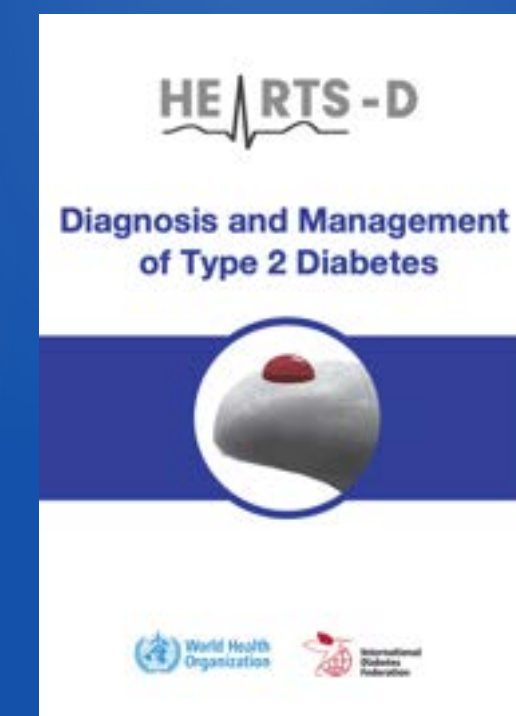
Global mapping of insulin manufacturers



Guidance on global monitoring for diabetes prevention and control



HEARTS-D: Diagnosis and management of type 2 diabetes



Keep in touch!



Stay connected

Interested in opportunities to get involved, upcoming events and new publications?

Sign up for the GDC newsletter



Contact our team

Have a question for the team or want more information about our work?

Contact us at GDC2030@who.int



Learn about our Forum

Is your organization working on diabetes and interested in engaging with us?

Apply to join the GDC Forum



Explore our website

Want to learn more about our vision, publications and opportunities to engage?

Visit the GDC website