

World Diabetes Day 2017: Women and diabetes: Our right to a healthy future

WHO/ Tania Habjouqa

On World Diabetes Day 2017, WHO joins partners around the world to highlight women's right to a healthy future. Around 8% of women – or 205 million women – live with diabetes worldwide, over half in South-East Asia and the Western Pacific. During pregnancy high blood glucose substantially increases the risk to health for both mother and child as well as the risk of diabetes for the child in the future. Almost half of women who die in low-income countries due to high blood glucose die prematurely, before the age of 70 years.

Diabetes is a major cause of blindness, kidney failure, heart attack, stroke and lower limb

amputation. Healthy diet, physical activity and avoiding tobacco use can prevent or delay type 2 diabetes. In addition diabetes can be treated and its consequences avoided or delayed with medication, regular screening and treatment for complications. Ensuring such actions form part of the recommendations of WHO's Global report on diabetes launched in 2016.

Established in 1991 by the International Diabetes Federation with support from WHO in response to growing concerns about the escalating health threat posed by diabetes, World Diabetes Day became an official UN day in 2006. The World Diabetes Day 2017 campaign promotes affordable

and equitable access for all women with diabetes or at risk of diabetes to the essential medicines and technologies, self-management education and information they require to achieve optimal diabetes outcomes and strengthen their capacity to prevent type 2 diabetes.

