



## **D-NET - the new online forum for diabetes education and care**

The International Diabetes Federation (IDF) has announced the launch of the Diabetes Education Network for Health Professionals ([www.idf.org/d-net](http://www.idf.org/d-net)) an

online discussion forum for diabetes healthcare professionals worldwide.

D-NET is open to all healthcare professionals who are interested in diabetes education and care. Forthcoming events are flagged, short video clips introduce educators around the globe, and there are interviews with the international experts that form the IDF Diabetes Education Consultative Section.

## **IDF supports surgery to treat type 2 diabetes in obese patients**

Bariatric surgery should be considered earlier in the treatment of eligible patients to help stem the serious complications that can result from diabetes, according to an International Diabetes Federation (IDF) position statement presented by leading experts at the 2nd World Congress on Interventional Therapies for type 2 Diabetes in New York in March.

The statement was written by 20 leading experts in diabetes and bariatric surgery who have made a series of recommendations on the use of weight loss surgery as a cost-effective treatment option for severely obese people with type 2 diabetes. According to the statement there is increasing evidence that the health of obese people with type 2 diabetes, including their glucose control and other obesity-related comorbidities, can benefit substantially from bariatric surgery under certain circumstances.

The IDF's Taskforce on Epidemiology and Prevention of Diabetes convened the expert group with specific goals to:

- develop practical recommendations for clinicians on patient selection and management;
- identify barriers to surgical access;
- suggest health policies that ensure equitable access to surgery;
- identify priorities for research.

Co-chairperson, Professor Sir George Alberti, Senior Research Investigator, Imperial College, London, said, 'Bariatric intervention is a health and cost-effective therapy for type 2 diabetes and obesity with an acceptable safety profile. Bariatric surgery for severely obese people with type 2 diabetes should be considered much earlier in management rather than held back as a last resort. It should be incorporated into type 2 diabetes treatment protocols.'

The expert group warns the situation in low- and middle-income nations presents special problems because severe obesity is increasing at an alarming rate.

As healthcare resources are limited, bariatric surgery should only be performed where the health budget can afford it, and that the expertise is available for both the surgery and the long-term follow-up.

## **Exercise, BMI, and insulin sensitivity**

A study in Tasmania, Australia, published in the *BMJ*, has confirmed a connection between exercise, BMI, and insulin sensitivity.

In the population-based cohort study, 592 adults (mean age 51 years) were assessed in 2000 and again in 2005. Physical activity was measured using a pedometer and a questionnaire and food intake was assessed by questionnaire.

The main outcome measures were BMI, waist-to-hip ratio, and HOMA insulin sensitivity in 2005. Over the course of the study the daily pedometer step count decreased in 65% of participants. BMI in 2005 fell by 0.08 kg/m<sup>2</sup> for every 1000 steps per day increase in pedometer count between 2000 and 2005. Increased step count was also associated with reduced waist-to-hip ratio, and greater insulin sensitivity. The increase in insulin sensitivity was less after adjustment for BMI.

Researchers concluded that increased physical activity as judged by daily step count was associated with increased insulin sensitivity over a 5-year period.

## **Waist circumference: the best predictor of future risk in children**

A long-term study, published in the *International Journal of Obesity*, by researchers in the USA and Australia suggests that waist circumference, rather than BMI, is the best clinical measure to predict a child's risk for cardiovascular disease and diabetes later in life. Researchers found that children with a high waist circumference value (in the top 25% for their age and sex) were five to six times more likely than children with a low waist circumference (in the bottom 25%) to develop metabolic syndrome by early adulthood. Previous studies have tended to use BMI as the primary measure of obesity, but this does not distinguish between fat and non-fat weight or indicate where the fat is located. In contrast, waist circumference measurements capture the amount of fat located centrally in the body - a location that prior studies have shown to be particularly detrimental to cardio-metabolic health.

## **World Diabetes Congress 2011**

This year's World Diabetes Congress (4-8 December) is the first to be organised in the Middle East and North Africa Region. Visit the website [www.worlddiabetescongress.org](http://www.worlddiabetescongress.org) to register online and view The Advance Programme.

